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**US MERCENARY ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTTOMAN WORLD, 1805-
1882**

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1882**

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2014

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my chair, Elizabeth Engelhardt, and to the members of my committee, Barbara Harlow, Steve Hoelscher, Naomi Paik, and Matt Richardson. Thank you to the Graduate School and the Department of American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin for their support for this project. Thank you to the members of the War Studies writing group, Andi Gustavson and Irene Garza. Thank you, Roberta Roberts, for everything. And above all, thank you to Alice Lehman, Grandma, without whom none of this would have been possible. I am so sad you did not make it to the finish line with me

US Mercenary Encounters with the Ottoman World, 1805-1882

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

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This dissertation examines nineteenth-century US mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world, including cases in which the United States employed American and foreign mercenaries for work in the Ottoman world and others in which Americans were employed as mercenaries by Ottoman regional governments. These mercenaries are often treated as historical footnotes, yet their encounters with the Ottoman world contributed to US culture and the texts they left behind continue to influence approaches to Africa and the Middle East. My analysis of these mercenary encounters and their legacies begins with the Battle of Derna in 1805—in which the US flag was raised above a battlefield for the first time outside of North America with the help of a mercenary army—and concludes with the British occupation of Egypt in 1882—which was witnessed by many of the US Civil War veterans who worked as mercenaries for the Egyptian government in the 1870s and 1880s. In four complementary case studies, I bring together sources that have been isolated from one another or never examined at length, including State Department documents, historic newspapers, first-person narratives, historiographical accounts, and—in terms of the contemporary resonance of the encounters I examine—films and documentary media. By focusing mercenary encounters in the Ottoman world through the lenses of memory, sovereignty, geography, and diplomacy, I reveal the ways in which mercenarism, while marginal in terms of its frequency and scope, produced important knowledge about the Ottoman world and helped to establish the complicated balance between intimacy and mastery that exists between Americans in the United States and people in Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, South Sudan, and Turkey. I argue

that mercenaries were significant tools of the state when other options were unavailable and that US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East—which still depends on mercenarism—is deeply rooted in nineteenth-century mercenary practices. My conclusions further trouble the distinction between legitimate state actors and mere soldiers of fortune that has been used to help draw the line between lawful and unlawful combatants in warfare, a foundational, yet extraordinarily fraught, component of international law.

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The Ottoman World



Based on a map at <http://www.juancole.com>.

Chronology of Events

1789-1807		Sultanate of Selim III
1801—1809		Presidency of Thomas Jefferson
1801—1805		US-Tripoli War
1804	November 25	William Eaton arrives in Alexandria
1805	April 27-June 12	Occupation of Derna by US forces
	June 18	Mehmed Ali becomes Viceroy of Egypt
1808—1839		Sultanate of Mahmud II
1809—1817		Presidency of James Madison
1813		George Bethune English publishes <i>The Grounds of Christianity Examined</i>
1815		US-Algeria War
1817—1825		Presidency of James Monroe
1821—1832		Greek War of Independence
1822		John Murray publishes the first edition of George Bethune English's <i>A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar</i> in London
1825—1829		Presidency of John Quincy Adams
1827		The Battle of Navarino
1828		George Bethune English dies in Washington, DC
1829—1837		Presidency of Andrew Jackson
1830		Treaty of Friendship between the United States and the Ottoman Empire
1831		First American Legation in Istanbul
1839—1861		Sultanate of Abdülmecid I
1848		Ibrahim assumes Viceroyalty of Egypt, dies shortly Mehmed Ali dies in Cairo
1848-1854		Viceroyalty of Abbas Pasha in Egypt
1854—1863		Viceroyalty of Sa'id Pasha in Egypt
1861—1876		Sultanate of Abdülaziz I

1861—1865		US Civil War
1863—1879		Viceroyalty of Isma'il Pasha
1869—1877		Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant
1869		The Suez Canal opens and former Union and Confederate officers begin to arrive in Egypt
1874—1875		Charles Chaillé-Long undertakes expeditions on behalf of Egypt in the Sudan and Uganda
1874—1876		Egypt-Abyssinia War
1876—1909		Sultanate of Abdülhamid II
1876		The Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia
1877-1881		Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes
1877		Long publishes <i>Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People</i> in the New York
1878		US mercenaries dismissed from Egyptian Service, excepting Erasmus Purdy and Charles Stone
1879		Isma'il deposed
1881—1885		Presidency of Chester A. Arthur
1881	June 21	Erasmus Purdy dies in Cairo
1882	May 28	Ahmed 'Urabi named Egyptian Minister of War
	July 10	British bombard Alexandria
1883	September 13	The Battle of Tel el-Kebir
		Charles Pomeroy Stone departs from Alexandria
1884		<i>The Century</i> publishes “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882”

US MERCENARY ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTTOMAN WORLD, 1805-1882

Introduction

While it is true to say that the United States did not in fact become a world empire until the twentieth century, it is also true that during the nineteenth century the United States was concerned with the Orient in ways that prepared for its later, overtly imperial concern.

Edward W. Said, 1978¹

Hail Columbia, happy land!
Hail, ye heroes, heav'n-born band,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone
Enjoy'd the peace your valor won.
Joseph Hopkinson, 1798²

In 1820, three American mercenaries—deserters from the US Navy and converts to Islam—swam together across the Nile to rejoin the Egyptian invasion force they had been hired to accompany into the Sudan. Several days behind the rest of the army and in no danger, the three men realized the humor in their situation and spontaneously sang out the lyrics to “Hail, Columbia,” a patriotic song written for George Washington’s 1789 inaugural.³ One of these three Americans, George Bethune English, remarked this was “probably the first time that the wilds of Africa ever re-echoed a song of Liberty.”⁴

English shortly thereafter returned to the United States after spending eight years in the Ottoman world and immediately went to work for the US government, secretly trying to

¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 25th anniversary edition. (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 293.

² Joseph Hopkinson, *Hail, Columbia* (Philadelphia: 1798).

³ Written by Philip Phile but not published until 1793, and first performed with lyrics added by Federalist Joseph Hopkinson in 1798 at the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

⁴ George Bethune English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 1st American Edition. (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1823).

negotiate a lucrative trade treaty with the Ottoman Porte in Istanbul.⁵ These episodes in English's life link together Egypt, Washington DC, and the capital of the Ottoman Empire, demonstrating that one of the "ways"—to borrow from Said—in which the United States was concerned with the Orient in the nineteenth century was a preoccupation with the Ottoman world. The Ottoman world, however, does not fall entirely within the geographic and ideological bounds of the Orient and *Orientalism*.⁶ At its peak, Ottoman sovereign power extended well into Europe and, at least nominally, into central Africa; until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Ottoman possessions were spread north of the Danube and the Sudan and Equatoria—3000 miles south of Istanbul—were considered distant outposts ruled by the Sultan. Americans traveling across the Atlantic might encounter the Ottoman world in the Greek isles or on the shores of Lake Victoria. And while a sense of mastery over the Orient as an object of discourse—a central argument of Said's *Orientalism*—was one of the productive outcomes of these encounters, they also produced other, more intimate results thanks to what Malini Johar Schueller calls "the deformative power of both particular writers and specific contexts."⁷ For example, fifty years after English accompanied the Egyptian army into the Sudan in 1820, former Union and Confederate soldiers helped to reform

⁵ The Porte refers to the "Sublime Porte," or the gateway to the Ottoman foreign ministry in Istanbul; the word is a metonym, like "the Pentagon" or "the White House," that often stands in for the central Ottoman government.

⁶ Useful criticisms of the limits of Said's analytical framework include Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity, and Representation*, Gender, Racism, Ethnicity (New York: Routledge, 1996). ———, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid*, Publications on the Near East (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

⁷ Malini Johar Schueller, *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998).

and rebuild the Egyptian army after a generation-long decline. In the process, these mercenaries produced a collection of texts that introduced US audiences to Central Africa and modern Egypt. While these mercenaries and their experiences are often treated as historical footnotes, their encounters with the Ottoman world helped to shape US culture in recognizable ways and the impressions they left behind continue to influence US approaches to Africa and the Middle East.

This dissertation demonstrates the productive nature of nineteenth-century mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world, as well as the complicated relationship between citizen, soldier, and state. I argue that mercenarism is a significant tool of the state, and that US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East is deeply rooted in nineteenth-century mercenary practices in the Ottoman world. My project helps to expand awareness of the overlooked history of the United States in the Ottoman world and brings together cases that have been isolated from one another or never examined at length in order to clarify that mercenarism is not just a legal, but also a social and cultural phenomenon with strong connections to the state. Furthermore, my project helps to illuminate some of the historic origins of the discourses that shape the US War on Terror and Overseas Contingency Operations. As such, and most crucially then, this dissertation demonstrates that the Ottoman world and all the meanings associated with it have been a central element in the construction of national identity in the United States, both during the nineteenth century and into the present day.

Shifting the Focus from Missionaries to Mercenarism

My work builds on and departs from contemporary scholarship on the role of the United States in the Ottoman world. Much of this work tends to focus on missionary work or religious themes.⁸ While it is true that US missionaries arrived in the Ottoman world before US mercenaries—the Moravian missionary John Antes was in Egypt for ten years beginning in 1769—mercenary work was a key site of encounter in the nineteenth-century, and mercenaries, whose missions were not viewed as overtly religious, experienced the Ottoman world differently than missionaries.⁹ In *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (2008), Heather J. Sharkey examines a series of missionary encounters with Egypt from the last half of the nineteenth century that produced “local, global, and transnational” social effects.¹⁰ Likewise, mercenary encounters accomplished similar social effects, constructing relationships between and among people, governments, and armies. Mercenaries and missionaries differ significantly, however. As Sharkey notes, American missionaries in the Middle East enjoyed substantial protection from “the armor of British imperial power.”¹¹ US mercenaries often lacked this protection—especially when they were working to undermine British power—and mercenaries’ relationships to other Western

⁸ Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Heather J. Sharkey, *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). Ussama Samir Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East*, *The United States in the World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

⁹ In some places—Uganda, for example—mercenaries arrived before missionaries. See Chapter Three of this dissertation.

¹⁰ Sharkey, *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire*, 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

powers differed widely from case to case. Another difference between missionaries and mercenaries has to do with religious sentiment. While many of the texts I examine fall within the bounds of what Timothy Marr describes as “American Islamicism,” others are less concerned with religion than with international affairs or development schemes.¹² I also trace the effects of mercenary encounters that I examine farther forward in time than most examinations of missionary encounters; several of my chapters include analyses of how mercenary encounters from the nineteenth century continue to surface in the twenty-first century.

Focusing on mercenaries, rather than missionaries, helps to complicate and debunk the clash of civilizations discourse that masks capitalism and the exercise of state power. Many commentators desire and work to sustain the fiction that present and past events demonstrate the ongoing division of the Christian and Islamic worlds.¹³ But the Christian and Islamic worlds were never so far apart as these writers would have readers believe. In *Two Faiths, One Banner: When Muslims Marched with Christians across Europe's Battlegrounds*, Ian Almond demonstrates that Christians and Muslims collaborated, often against other Christians and Muslims, across southern Europe for eight-hundred years. What Almond calls “the fantasy of Europe” relies on the erasure of

¹² Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, 1-19.

¹³ For an example of this divisive discourse, see Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982). ———, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). For an analysis of contemporary anti-Islamic discourse, see John Feffer, *Crusade 2.0: The West's Resurgent War on Islam* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2012). Especially relevant to the field from which this project emerges, in a 2013 interview, Stephen Whitfield, a professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University and opponent of the ASA resolution calling for an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions, described the current alignment of the Middle East as an “historically intractable conflict” that “is way beyond the focus of the ASA.” Sean Savage, “American Studies Professors: Israel Boycott Antithetical to Values of Academia,” JNS.org, <http://www.jns.org/latest-articles/2013/12/18/american-studies-professors-israel-boycott-antithetical-to-scholarly-pursuits>. I would argue that nothing could be further from the truth.

these Muslims from European history.¹⁴ And as Paul Baepler notes of the figure of the Barbary pirate—who still haunts US memory—“the construction of ‘barbarity’ becomes particularly elaborate when we recall that many of the Barbary corsairs were enterprising Christians who ‘turned Turk’ and enslaved their own.”¹⁵ A careful reading of the mercenary encounters that I examine demonstrates that the nineteenth-century Mediterranean was not simply an arena of competition divided between Christians and Muslims. Rather, it was a site of struggle with multiple realms, both territorial and discursive. Each of my case studies shows Muslims and Christians working side by side in the Ottoman world. During the War with Tripoli in 1805, for example, the US-led mercenary army that attacked Derna was composed primarily of Muslims recruited in Alexandria. In the 1870s, the mercenaries who formed the Egyptian General Staff were Christians from the United States. All these mercenaries were able to imagine a world in which Christians and Muslims shared vital interests—or at least shared enemies.

The historical relationship between the United States and the Ottoman world and intimate relations among Christians and Muslims are important subjects of this dissertation. Along with examining the ways in which these relationships were negotiated through mercenarism, my dissertation is also concerned with the ways in which the figure of the mercenary has been fashioned and deployed. The multiple discourses surrounding the mercenary—often a catch-all term for soldiers of fortune, filibusters and others—becomes particularly important as I question the role of marginal labor in the

¹⁴ Ian Almond, *Two Faiths, One Banner: When Muslims Marched with Christians across Europe's Battlegrounds* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 2.

¹⁵ Paul Michel Baepler, "The Barbary Captivity Narrative in American Culture," *Early American Literature* 39, no. Number 2 (2004), 230.

development and maintenance of US imperialism. Rather than attempt to decide who exactly qualifies as a mercenary, I frame my argument by drawing a distinction between mercenary labor, which is abstract and legalistic, and mercenarism, which is an embodied, everyday practice.¹⁶ Mercenarism, according to Janice E. Thomson, includes both “practices of enlisting in and recruiting for a foreign government” or “buying an army from the international system.” Along with Thomson, I draw from Abdel-Fatau Musah and J. ‘Kayode Fayemi, who define mercenarism as “the practice of foreign professional soldiers freelancing their labour and skills to a party in a conflict for fees higher and above those of soldiers of the state in conflict.”¹⁷ By choosing definitions that highlight mercenarism as a practice—rather than simply a form of labor—I hope to better understand mercenaries’ imaginative work and the contributions they made to the United States. Many of the mercenaries that this project describes believed they were engaged in work that would benefit the United States, even if it was not the United States signing their paycheck.

Both these definitions of mercenarism also speak to the widely held belief that mercenaries are somehow foreign to the conflicts in which they find themselves involved; true to this, the mercenary encounters that I examine include both cases in which the United States employed “foreign” mercenaries for work in the Ottoman world and others

¹⁶ If I were to try to outline what a mercenary looks like, I might draw on Article 7 of the Geneva Convention, but something would be lost in the process, since the Convention considers a mercenary someone who takes part in hostilities. Enlisting in foreign service or working as a soldier does not require that a hired hand necessarily participate in combat; a mercenary is as likely to be engaged in making maps as leading a cavalry charge.

¹⁷ Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 27, 54. Abdel-Fatau Musah and 'Kayode Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 5.

in which “Americans” were employed as mercenaries by Ottoman regional governments. Throughout, I refer to both these groups as US mercenaries. Yet, mercenaries—however “foreign” they may or may not be to whomever or whatever they serve—do not always enlist or work simply for financial rewards as Thomson’s and Musah and Fayemi’s definitions suggest. Thomson describes the system of compensation in terms of “buying an army,” highlighting the role of the state or other entities in organizing mercenarism as a form of labor. Musah and Fayemi describe mercenarism as “freelancing,” or trading legitimacy for higher pay. I want to push back against both these definitions. Imagining the market as a rational space in which firms (states) purchase and individuals (mercenaries) sell labor, simply shifts the responsibility for mercenarism from the state to capital. But mercenarism, as I will argue throughout, is a practice deeply inflected by discourses of nationalism, gender, and race that are bound by neither capital nor the state. Mercenarism may be as old as warfare, as many authorities insist, as well as an ongoing phenomenon, if our eyes are to be believed, but neither capital nor the state exercise total hegemony over its practice.

If, over the course of the nineteenth century, the state did indeed displace the market as the dominant force organizing violence as Thomson and others argue, mercenarism nevertheless remained a productive force in the United States throughout the century.¹⁸ In the 1850s, filibusters—“American adventurers who raised or participated in private military forces that invaded or planned to invade foreign countries

¹⁸ Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 9; Nicholas Parillo, “The De-Privatization of American Warfare: How the U.S. Government Used, Regulated, and Ultimately Abandoned Privateering in the Nineteenth Century,” *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 19, no. 1 (2007).

with which the United States was formally at peace”—engaged in schemes to seize control of Latin American colonies and countries, ranging from Cuba in 1851 to Nicaragua in 1856.¹⁹ But beyond mere freebooters in search of profit, many of the participants in these adventures had patriotic motives. As Walter Johnson points out, filibusters like Narciso Lopez and William Walker played a significant role in efforts to try to realize a national fantasy, a US empire centered around New Orleans—“a future that never came to pass.”²⁰ Just as the perceived failures of the filibusters caused later Americans to reimagine US empire as spearheaded by the military—rather than small, corporatized armies—the reaction to mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world shaped US foreign policy in Africa and the Middle East.

To these ends, then, the four mercenary encounters I examine—the Battle of Derna in 1805, George Bethune English in the Ottoman world from 1815-1828, Charles Chaillé-Long in Central Africa in 1874-1875, and the American mission to Egypt in the 1870s—respond to three important questions: First, what were the productive outcomes of nineteenth-century mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world? In other words, how did these encounters surface in everyday life in the United States? Revealing the productive nature of mercenarism—especially the racial and gender discourses it produced—prompts my second question. What was the relationship of mercenarism to US state formations in these encounters? In other words, how does mercenarism obscure

¹⁹ Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). A helpful etymology of the term filibuster and historiographical work that ranges geographically from Texas to Nicaragua can be found in James Jeffrey Roche, *The Story of the Filibusters* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1891).

²⁰ Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University., 2013), 321.

the relationship between citizen and state? My answer to this question helps to reveal the extent to which mercenarism works as an instrument of imperialism. Finally, how do nineteenth-century mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world inform contemporary US practices in Africa and the Middle East? By answering this last question, I provide historical context for contemporary debates about mercenarism, while offering relevant insights into the exceptionalist narratives and cultural practices that enable US imperialism across time and space. My historical and cultural approach to answering these questions helps to explain the pervasiveness of mercenarism in spite of juridical efforts to eliminate it, and my conclusions trouble the distinction between legitimate state actors and mere soldiers of fortune that has been used to help draw the line between lawful and unlawful combatants in warfare, a foundational, yet extraordinarily fraught, component of international law.

Methods and Organization

My investigation of mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world is an interdisciplinary project originating in American studies. This project builds on and revises important work in the field by describing a series of encounters with the nineteenth-century Ottoman world that helped shape the United States—its self-creation, boundary drawing, and continued re-imagining. That the Ottoman Empire is significant in US history might seem like a surprising claim, and even Edward Said once dismissed the possibility of any real US policy in what was commonly referred to simply as “the East”, saying “the imaginative investment was never made either, perhaps because the American frontier,

the one that counted, was a westward one.”²¹ Scholars following Said have understood the relationship between the United States and the Ottoman world mostly through the lens of missionaries and religion, yet in 1825, John Quincy Adams, architect of the Monroe Doctrine, offered George Bethune English a generous stipend of \$2000 a year to act as the United States’ secret representative in Istanbul in an effort to secure US access to Ottoman ports as well as the Black Sea and Russian products like hemp, flax, and iron.²² Said’s point is taken; looking backward, it is easy to see how westward expansion fueled the engine of US growth. But what cases like English’s prove is that British parliamentarian Benjamin Disraeli’s claim in *Tancred* (1847)—that “the East is a career”—did not just apply to Europeans. As Said appraised, “to be interested in the East was something bright young Westerners should find to be an all-consuming passion.”²³ Among those Westerners were Americans, and for a time the East was full of possibility for them, too. Operating on both the individual and national level, mercenarism played an important role in the eastern front of US commerce. And for many Americans, working in the Ottoman world was a profitable career, and one that could make valuable contributions to the imaginative vision of the United States. Finally, at the highest levels of government, mercenarism was seen as an important means to an end.

²¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 290.

²² John Quincy Adams, *Washington, John Quincy Adams to George Bethune English, April 2, 1823*, Adams Papers (Washington: Massachusetts Historical Society). George Bethune English and James Monroe, *Washington, Receipt for Expence Money from the Department of State for \$2000, April 4, 1823*, Adams Papers (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society). Alfred W. Crosby, Jr., *America, Russia, Hemp, and Napoleon: American Trade with Russia and the Baltic, 1783-1812* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965).

²³ Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred: Or, the New Crusade* (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), 167. Said, *Orientalism*, 4.

Although none of the mercenary encounters I write about are completely absent from the historiography of the period, few scholars draw from the cultural texts produced by these encounters or associate mercenarism with the cultural and political landscape of the United States at large. Yet mercenary narratives of encounters with the Ottoman world—including books, newspaper articles, and lectures—influenced the ways in which Americans viewed themselves, as well as the ways in which they interacted with people inside and outside the nation’s border. Many of the texts I examine circulated widely, and their authors were recognized as experts on subjects ranging from Ottoman relations with Europe to the history of the Egyptian army. Even now, these mercenary narratives continue to influence the way Americans view themselves in the world. In just the last decade, for example, countless books and websites have been published that use the War with Tripoli and Battle of Derna (Chapter One of this dissertation) to demonstrate an unbridgeable divide between Islam and the West. These publications deny Muslims any credit for the US victory at Derna in 1805, in spite of the fact that Muslim mercenaries accounted for most of the soldiers fighting on behalf of the United States. Overshadowed in exceptionalist narratives which exaggerate the labor of the small number of Americans present at Derna, these Muslims are excluded from the pantheon of American heroes.²⁴

By identifying the exceptional national narratives produced by mercenarism, my analysis expands our understanding of US imperialism.²⁵ Recent scholarship on US

²⁴ The contributions of black Muslims from Africa in the United States have been recognized by scholars for some time. Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*, 15th anniversary edition. (New York: NYU Press, 2013).

²⁵ Any investigation of imperialism begs the question “what exactly do you mean by imperialism?” US imperialism has been strongly identified with “external investment and penetration and control of markets,” yet as Raymond Williams points out, “imperialism, like any word which refers to fundamental social and

imperialism continues a long tradition of studying the 1898 War with Spain, often seen as the inaugural moment of US empire, while continuing to extend the timeline of the nation's aspirations for empire farther backwards in time.²⁶ Scholars like Jill Lepore and Shelley Streeby have shown how imperialism is a common thread in important conflicts ranging from King Philip's War in 1675 to the War with Mexico in 1848.²⁷ A generation of scholars, in fact, has examined the significance of the 1848 War with Mexico, in the process uncovering a tangled dependence of continental and overseas imperialism.²⁸ As David Kazanjian points out in his analysis of the years leading up to that war, imperialism depends on this mutual construction of the domestic and the foreign.²⁹ The shape of the empire imagined in the mercenary narratives that I examine also has much in common with the commercial empire that Shelley Streeby describes in *American Sensations* (2002).³⁰ During the first half of the nineteenth century US mercenarism in the Ottoman world was primarily organized around securing commerce in the Mediterranean, first by eliminating piracy and second by establishing equal commercial footing with

political conflicts, cannot be reduced, semantically, to a single proper meaning." Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Revised Edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 159-160.

²⁶ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 50th anniversary edition. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009). Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*, 35th anniversary edition. Cornell Paperbacks (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998). Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*, Convergences (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

²⁷ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*, First Vintage Books edition. (New York: Vintage Books, 1999). Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*, American Crossroads (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

²⁸ José David Saldivar, *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies*, American Crossroads (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*.

²⁹ David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America*, Critical American Studies Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 223.

³⁰ Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*, 9.

European merchants in Ottoman ports. In the last half of the nineteenth century, mercenary narratives of the Ottoman world imagined a significant management role for the United States. But none of the mercenaries I examine imagined the planting of colonies or the incorporation of distant territories or people.

Scholars investigating US imperialism have also demonstrated that it does not operate simply through formal mechanisms of state, but through cultural forms as well. Lepore, for instance, locates the dehumanizing language of US imperialism deep in our Puritan roots. Yet the Wars with Philip, Mexico, and Spain were all clear manifestations of imperial desire expressed through violence—wars that were recognized as such at the time. The mercenary encounters that I examine are less formal, more loosely organized manifestation of US imperialism. Besides the War with Tripoli, none of my cases focus on wars in which the United States was involved. Aside from the Egyptian-Abyssinian War, which comes up in Chapter Four, the mercenaries I examine were also only tangentially involved in armed conflict.³¹ This is not to say that violence is not a constant presence throughout these narratives. Even when no one is shouldering a rifle, people are being violated and hostile representations are being crafted. Nevertheless, all these encounters make wide-ranging contributions to the culture of US imperialism that Amy Kaplan described in “Left Alone with America” (1993).³² In her essay, a central text in the field of American studies, Kaplan points out the denials and absences that are so

³¹ This holds true today with private military contractors. In March 2013, less than 2% of the 108,000 contract employees working for the Department of Defense in Afghanistan were involved in security operations. Moshe Schwartz and Jennifer Church, "Department of Defense's Use of Contractors to Support Military Operations: Background, Analysis, and Issues for Congress," in *CRS Report for Congress* (Congressional Research Service, May 17, 2013).

³² Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, New Americanists (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 3-21.

central to the narrative production of US imperialism. The same denials and absences mask mercenarism and the origins of US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East.

Finally, because decentering the nation-state as the primary agent of history is so important, I am particularly interested in challenging the typical periodization of US history, which is organized around the US Civil War. If we take seriously the admonitions of global and transnational American studies, we must recognize that US history crosses any of the borders we set for it.³³ For many of the Americans who worked as mercenaries in Egypt during the 1870s, it was their service in the Ottoman world that defined them, not the four years they spent engaged in war with their countrymen; for them, it was not necessarily combat, but professional work that constituted their most important contributions to the United States. Because of this, their service in Egypt is often more closely related to the service they provided in the years leading up to the Civil War—especially in western exploration and the War with Mexico—than it is to their labor in the sectional conflict that divided the nation for four years. For example, Charles Stone, whom I discuss in Chapter Four, was a successful officer before the US Civil War and again in Egypt. But he spent much of the war trying to clear his name after being accused of negligence in 1861. Stone rarely finds his way into analyses of US history because his career straddles the great divide of the Civil War. Likewise, the War with Tripoli and the Greek War of Independence are rarely seen as important lessons in US history; I argue that these wars are, in fact, foundational to the present spatial configurations of US imperialism. Rather than acquiesce to demands that the curriculum

³³ Rosemarie Zagarri, "The Significance of the 'Global Turn' for the Early American Republic: Globalization in the Age of Nation-Building," *The Journal of the Early Republic* 31, no. 1 (2011).

of US history stick closer to the “traditionalist view”—i.e. US exceptionalism—we must radicalize and continue to illuminate the denials, absences, and gaps of empire.

In order to illuminate denials, absences, and gaps, I organize my examination of US mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world into four case studies. Each of these case studies illustrates a temporally- and geographically-situated mercenary encounter with the Ottoman world, ranging from Derna in 1805 to Cairo in 1882. I analyze each of these encounters by applying one of four analytic lenses: memory, sovereignty, geography, or diplomacy. Each of these lenses works as a key component of my argument supported by theoretical work across several fields of study, revealing the ways in which mercenarism, while marginal in terms of its prevalence and scope as an instrument of state, was nonetheless a productive force in the nineteenth century. Though each case study is focused by a single analytic lens, it would be possible to apply any of the four lenses that I use to each mercenary encounter that I examine. For instance, I could use the lens from Chapter Two—sovereignty—to discuss the encounter in Chapter One—the War with Tripoli. As Moulay Ali Bounani has argued of the War with Tripoli, “the symbolic threat to US sovereignty” that provoked the war “generated numerous literary attempts to embody the US as a virtuous, manly empire that North African nations would be forced to recognize as a formidable power.”³⁴ But the ways in which the War with Tripoli has been remembered are far more important, however, than any real effect the war had on US sovereignty. And, likewise, sovereignty is a more useful lens than memory for understanding George Bethune English’s encounter with the Ottoman

³⁴ Moulay Ali Bouânani, “Propaganda for Empire: Barbary Captivity Literature in the US,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 7, no. 4 (2009), 407.

world in Chapter 2. Focusing each encounter through a single lens allows me to narrow my scope and investigate otherwise disconnected threads across multiple archives in which mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world surface. By using geography as my lens in Chapter Three, for example, I reveal how an 1874 mercenary narrative oriented Americans to the landscape of Central Africa; the text's representations of racialized space continue to occupy an important role in twenty-first century US attitudes towards the Sudan and Uganda. Similarly, using diplomacy as my lens in Chapter Four allows me to draw from both the official State Department archives, housed in the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and a collection of cultural texts that are neither "official," in the sense of being sanctioned by the government, nor entirely "unauthorized," simply due to their mercenary nature. These cultural texts—focused on both military matters and domestic life—help to negotiate relations between Egypt and the United States in the 1870s.

Because of the geographical and temporal scope of my four case studies—covering four continents and spanning more than two-hundred years—I rely on an interdisciplinary methodology that draws from discussions in history, postcolonial studies, and international relations. And because they stretch over the last two centuries and bleed from Egypt into Africa and the Middle East, my case studies are complementary, rather than comprehensive. I provide historic background for each chapter, but my cases are not exhaustive of Egyptian, Ottoman, African, Middle Eastern, or US history and international relations. And since my case studies are organized around memory, sovereignty, geography, and diplomacy, I do not proceed in a strictly

chronological manner. Chapter One, for example, deals with texts that range from the inaugural years of the republic to the War on Terror. Chapter Two deals almost exclusively with material from the period 1813-1828. Chapter Three focuses on a mercenary encounter that took place in 1874 and its contemporary repercussions in Africa. Finally, Chapter Four investigates material from the 1870s and 1880s, as well as the first two decades of the twentieth century. These different approaches to time and space, ranging from drawn out and diffuse to abbreviated and compact, help to demonstrate both the immediate and long-term consequences of US mercenary encounters with the nineteenth-century Ottoman world.

In Part I of this dissertation, I establish that the Ottoman world was an important site in the production of US identity, not just for Americans in the nineteenth century, but in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as well. Ottoman recognition of the United States was essential to establishing national sovereignty and the Battle of Derna provided a model for future US interventions elsewhere. In these first two chapters, I outline the historical setting of the Mediterranean and Ottoman world between 1801 and 1830 to help readers who are not familiar with the history of the region during this formative period of US engagement with what most Americans now understand simply as the Middle East and North Africa.

Chapter One analyzes the ways in which the War with Tripoli and the Battle of Derna have appeared in cultural and historical memory in the United States. I begin with a short history of the War with Tripoli and the formation of the Barbary Coast in order to contextualize my analysis of the ways in which the Battle of Derna has been invoked to

sustain the rhetoric of American exceptionalism as well as to teach valuable lessons about the conduct and content of war. Memorializations of the battle also efface the role of the Muslim mercenaries who provided the vast majority of the military labor that helped the United States capture the city. Rather than strictly recounting an episode from the past, representations of the climactic battle of the war have been mobilized to teach Americans important lessons about race, gender, and militarization in moments of crisis including World War II, the Cold War, and the War on Terror. My analysis of a mercenary encounter that has been frequently and widely remembered leads me to travel further into the archives to examine a mercenary encounter that has not been as well remembered.

Chapter Two turns to the case of George Bethune English in order to further explain the importance of the Ottoman world in the nineteenth-century United States. A religious dissident who was under attack for rejecting Christianity in the United States, English arrived in Alexandria as a US Marine in 1818. He subsequently resigned his commission and participated in Egypt's invasion of the kingdom of Sennar on the Upper Nile. By 1823, English was once again working for the United States, and he traveled to Istanbul twice to negotiate with the Ottoman government on behalf of Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams. My analysis of English's archival remains helps to explain the role of the Ottoman Empire in establishing US sovereignty as well as the ambiguous relationship between Washington DC and Istanbul in the years leading up to the 1830 treaty between the two powers. Access to Ottoman ports on equal footing with European nations was an important point of pride for the republic's commercial class, and for George Bethune English the Ottoman world was an important site to practice

personal sovereignty while simultaneously continuing to demonstrate his commitment to US exceptionalism. English offers tantalizing insights into the constraints and value of marginal labor in the project of nation-building during the period of the early republic. Mercenarism like the kind I examine in these first two chapters surfaced on a much larger scale in the Ottoman world later in the nineteenth century.

Part II of this dissertation moves forward to the years preceding the late-nineteenth-century “scramble for Africa,” a period of increasing European colonialism on the continent. In Chapters Three and Four, I examine the cultural work of the American mercenaries who worked in Egypt from 1869 to 1883, as Egypt moved to expand its control over African trade while balancing its obligations to the Ottoman Sultan and resisting British and French influence. US mercenaries were significantly invested in Egyptian nationalism during this period and the writings they produced in the 1870s and beyond continue to influence perceptions of Africa and the Middle East in the twenty-first century. In each chapter, I historicize the US experience in Egypt, while threading together an ongoing story that links the present to the past.

Chapter Three investigates the geographic production of Charles Chaillé-Long, who worked as an explorer during an important period of Egyptian expansion. Long led two major expeditions into central Africa in 1874-75, and after returning to the United States he continued to write about his experiences in the region for many years. Long’s claim that he was part of an official mission from the United States while working as Charles Gordon’s Chief of Staff in Egypt’s Equatorial provinces has been repeatedly

dismissed for well over one-hundred years.³⁵ These dismissals work to obscure the role of the United States in, as well as American contributions to, the racialized geography of Central Africa; the scramble for Africa was not merely a European pursuit.³⁶ In the United States, Long positioned himself as an expert on Egyptian and African affairs, especially the events leading up to the death of Charles Gordon in Khartoum in 1885. But more importantly, Long's accounts of Southern Sudan and Uganda contributed to several tropes of Africa—cannibalism and sovereign cruelty, for example—that continue to circulate in the United States. Ranging from Idi Amin in the 1970s to Joseph Kony in the 2010s, the United States frequently invoked these tropes in order to conjure up monsters and justify the securitization and militarization of African policy.

Chapter Four examines the role of mercenary diplomacy in forging the image of Egypt in the United States during the reign of Isma'il Pasha and in the years following the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. This chapter focuses on the political, mercenary, and cultural work of the “American mission” to Egypt in the 1870s. Composed of many former combatants from the US Civil War as well as their families and diplomatic staff, the mission functioned as an important site of national reconciliation while creating a space in which Americans were able to simultaneously embrace an exceptional national narrative of the United States, criticize European nations for their imperialism, and embrace Egypt. But while the mercenary narratives produced by the American mission meant to highlight modern Egypt, they unwittingly contributed to the anachronistic

³⁵ The denial of legitimacy to mercenary agents is a common theme of this dissertation.

³⁶ In fact, President Chester Arthur of United States recognized Leopold's claim to the Congo, an inaugural event in the scramble for Africa, on April 22, 1884, six months before the Berlin Conference convened.

representation of Egypt in the United States. The gendered logic of this encounter and its effects on US culture help us to understand the long fascination with Egypt in the United States.

Contemporary Significance

This dissertation contributes to the field of American studies by exploring the cultural production of US mercenaries in the nineteenth-century Ottoman world. My four case studies also explore the relationship of mercenarism to state formations and seek to make urgent contributions to our understanding of the foundations of US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East. By establishing a link between the state and mercenaries and rejecting the narrative of the mercenary as a figure who falls outside the bounds of the nation, I urge readers to consider that mercenarism—in the nineteenth century and today— is often bound to the state. Typically, states evade culpability for mercenarism by placing the blame for it and other marginal forms of violence on individuals. As Allen Feldman argues of contemporary South Africa, for “media, a significant portion of the white public, and representatives of the former apartheid state, excessive state violence does not originate in the apartheid state apparatus or in the historical culture of racism, but in the behavioral and moral pathology of individual perpetrators, or ‘bad apples.’” There are serious limitations to locating culpability for violence solely in the individual, however. Of South Africa, Feldman concludes, “this individualizing perspective obscured any clear understanding of institutionalized racism or its inflection of the state’s

counterinsurgency campaign's terror."³⁷ In the United States, similar disavowals of mercenarism work to shift the responsibility for violence away from the state and other structures and onto a few "bad apples," who appear to be acting on their own as mercenaries, not necessarily as agents of the state.

I work against the bad apple approach to mercenarism by arguing that mercenaries do not simply appear out of nowhere, or merely as byproducts of legal discourses. Mercenaries like George Bethune English and Charles Chaillé-Long were cultivated and steeped in national discourses in the United States, and each of my case studies demonstrates strong ties between mercenaries and the state. This dissertation, however, moves beyond simply reclaiming these men's historical labor in the service of the state; none of the mercenaries I investigate were necessarily good apples. I establish a link between nineteenth-century US policy makers and US mercenaries in the Ottoman world in order to challenge the notion of mercenaries as non-state actors under the Westphalian model of sovereignty that has shaped international law since 1648. This notion—that mercenaries are not aligned with states—has resulted in a legal opposition between state and mercenary that is misleading, especially when we take into account the experience of actual mercenaries. By carrying out policy using outsourced labor—mercenaries—nation-states evade many of their basic obligations under the international system, most notably the principle of non-intervention in other nation's affairs. My case studies demonstrate that mercenarism often functions as a *de facto* instrument of state.

³⁷ Allen Feldman, "Political Terror and the Technologies of Memory: Excuse, Sacrifice, Commodification, and Actuarial Moralities," *Radical History Review* 85, no. 1 (2003). The same logic of culpability is also extended to racism, sexism, etc. as a way of obscuring the racializing and gendering mechanisms of the state.

For example, in Chapter Four, I demonstrate that while a formal alliance between the United States and Egypt was impossible in the 1870s, the two countries had a significant relationship that was mediated by the presence of more than fifty US mercenaries; Egyptian expansion was not viewed as incongruent with the United States' own imperial desire. By examining nineteenth-century mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world, I reveal that the United States has long used mercenarism to wage war and carry out policy overseas.³⁸ Each of my case studies probes the unclear line between the state and mercenaries by interrogating the notion that mercenaries are disinterested soldiers, who fight only for money or glory, rather than love of country.

The authority of the state over violence is a central assumption at the heart of international law and the law of war.³⁹ Yet mercenarism remains central to conflicts around the world, presenting an extraordinary challenge to social stability.⁴⁰ Though the state has a significant role in organizing mercenarism, we must also look beyond it for answers to this problem. As Feldman's observation about state violence in South Africa illustrates, it is not just the state that is responsible for the fiction of individual culpability for violence, but social and cultural institutions as well. Each of my four case studies investigates historical archives and reads cultural texts in order to connect distant

³⁸ The United States is not unique in this regard. Many nations depend on and help mercenarism to flourish. Nor is the United States unique in denying responsibility for the sometimes violent outcomes of mercenarism. For a comparison of the reputations of South African, Israeli, British, French, and US military contractors based on their relationship to their home government, see Kevin A. O'Brien, "Private Military Companies and African Security 1990-98," in *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, ed. Abdel-Fatau Musah and Kayode Fayemi (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

³⁹ Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 9. Parillo, "The De-Privatization of American Warfare: How the U.S. Government Used, Regulated, and Ultimately Abandoned Privateering in the Nineteenth Century."

⁴⁰ Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, *Peace, Profit or Plunder?: The Privatisation of Security in War-Torn African Societies* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1999). Musah and Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*.

manifestations of mercenarism to attitudes and practices in the United States. Just as scholars have worked to place filibusters within the social context of the United States in the nineteenth century, my expansive framework and juxtaposition of historical archives and cultural texts work to uncover the foundations of US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East.

Little attention had been paid to US mercenaries in the Ottoman world. This oversight has implications for the way we think about the role of the United States in Africa and the Middle East. In Africa, mercenaries have been a common feature of colonial regimes, wars of decolonization, and postcolonial conflict. Africans have repeatedly faced off against mercenaries from former colonial regimes, employed these mercenaries to their own end, and have been employed themselves as mercenaries around the globe.⁴¹ The apparently strong connection between mercenarism and the continent cannot be overlooked. In the Middle East, the most glaring example of ongoing mercenarism has been the company formerly known as Blackwater, which, along with other contractors, played a central role in the US War on Terror.⁴² One of the results of the failure to examine the historic connection between mercenarism and the state has been a willfulness on the part of Western nations in overlooking or failing to hold their

⁴¹ Barbara Harlow, "'Good Men in Africa?' from Missionaries to Mercenaries," in *Africanizing Knowledge: African Studies across the Disciplines*, ed. Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishing, 2002). Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001). Max Delany, "Why 10,000 Ugandans Are Eagerly Serving in Iraq," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 March, 2009.

⁴² Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army* (New York: Nation Books, 2008). P. W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, Updated edition. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

citizens accountable for violence and privateering in the Third World and elsewhere.⁴³ Operating under the guise of security and profitability, private military contractors have been condoned and embraced by powerful nations seeking cost-effective and often extrajudicial solutions to maintain control of resource streams. Preventing this mercenary component of contemporary warfare and statecraft has proved difficult because mercenarism occurs at the margins of international law, in the gray territory between nation states.⁴⁴ By enabling states to act quasi-judicially, and encouraging non-state actors to make top-down claims to sovereignty simply by hiring an army, mercenarism presents an especially venomous threat to peace and security. In what was one-hundred years ago the domain of the Ottoman Empire, mercenarism continues to function as a way of building bases, alliances, and networks of military resources. At the same time, scholarship on the foundations of contemporary US imperialism in Africa and the Middle East remains rare. An American studies approach that can connect “Hail, Columbia” on the Nile in 1820 to Blackwater in Baghdad in 2007 can help to remedy both these problems.

⁴³ As the appearance of private security contractors on the streets of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina in 2006 demonstrates, it is not just in the Third World that mercenaries appear.

⁴⁴ Prevention is also elusive because mercenarism has its advocates. In Africa and elsewhere, mercenaries have been promoted as a security solution, rather than a threat to stability. David Shearer, “Outsourcing War,” *Foreign Policy* (1998). Paul R. Verkuil, *Outsourcing Sovereignty: Why Privatization of Government Functions Threatens Democracy and What We Can Do About It* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

1. REMEMBERING FOR EMPIRE: THE BATTLE OF DERNA; OR, THE MERCENARY ENCOUNTER THAT NEVER ENDS

Wars have been defining episodes in American history. For more than 200 years, Americans have gone to war to win their independence, expand their national boundaries, define their freedoms, and defend their interests around the globe. Smithsonian Curatorial Staff, 2004¹

In 2004, the Smithsonian debuted “The Price of Freedom: Americans at War,” a permanent exhibition at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC. The exhibit occasioned strong criticism, much of it directed at the curatorial staff for their endorsement of militarism.² Carol Burke accurately summed up the exhibit’s tone: “reverential, promotional history, what used to be called propaganda”³ Amidst all this criticism, however, what has gone unexamined is the curious absence of the 1801-05 War with Tripoli from the exhibit. Perhaps the War with Tripoli was deemed too trendy in 2004 for inclusion in the pantheon of US wars that the exhibit haphazardly crafts.⁴ After all, the exhibit opened just as a flood of journalistic histories were declaring that the War

¹ Staff, “The Price of Freedom: Americans at War,” in (Washington, DC: Smithsonian National Museum of American History, 2004).

² Edward Rothstein, “Drawing Battle Lines in Museum View of War,” *The New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2004/11/11/arts/design/11free.html?_r=0. Carol Burke, “The Price of Freedom Is Truth,” *Radical History Review*, no. 95 (2006). Scott Boehm, “Privatizing Public Memory: The Price of Patriotic Philanthropy and the Post-9/11 Politics of Display,” *American Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2006). Kristin Hass et al., “What Is the Price of Freedom?: A Critical Exploration of Militarist Narratives at the National Museum of American History,” at *The Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association* (Baltimore: October 22, 2011). Kristin Hass et al., “The Price of Freedom App: Discussing a Collaboratively Produced Alternative Tour of the Smithsonian’s History of American Wars,” at *The Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association* (Washington, DC: November 24, 2013).

³ Burke, “The Price of Freedom Is Truth,” 243.

⁴ The exhibit is organized primarily around the War of Independence, the War of 1812, the Eastern Indian Wars, the Mexican War, the Western Indian Wars, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and something the curators call “New American Roles.”

with Tripoli was “America’s first War on Terror.”⁵ The museum’s hesitance to include Tripoli as an enemy of the United States alongside Native America, Spain, Germany, and others might be understandable if the War with Tripoli had only become fashionable to bring up in the context of the War on Terror. But the War with Tripoli has long been invoked as an important lesson in US history.⁶ The assault on and short occupation of the coastal town of Derna by US-led forces in 1805 holds particular significance because it was the first time the US flag was raised over a territory outside of North America. Though seldom recognized, the Battle of Derna is also significant because the US victory depended almost entirely on the mercenary labor of North African Muslims, a fact that is brushed aside in narratives of the battle that are organized around US exceptionalism. Perhaps this is why the Smithsonian neglects the War with Tripoli; the climactic battle of the war—the only US victory during four years of combat, in fact—was not won by Americans in any conventional sense of the word.

In this chapter, I argue that the mercenary encounter at Derna has been remembered in the United States for over two-hundred years as a strategic precedent and justification for US interventions overseas, while simultaneously reinforcing the racial, gender, and sexual logics on which US exceptionalism depends by minimizing the labor

⁵ Joseph Wheelan, *Jefferson’s War: America’s First War on Terror, 1801-1805* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2003). David Smethurst, *Tripoli: The United States’ First War on Terror* (New York: Presidio Press, 2006).

⁶ In the United States, writers and historians generally refer to the War with Tripoli as the First Barbary War; the 1815 War with Algeria is labeled the Second Barbary War. This naming convention calls to mind the wars’ geographical and chronological proximity; they fell only ten years apart, and both took place on the Mediterranean coast of Africa west of Egypt, known throughout the English-speaking world as the Barbary Coast since the seventeenth century. The Barbary, however, is not merely a geographic signifier, but rather an Orientalist trope with a life of its own, far away from the reality of everyday life in North Africa. Rather than take on the whole of the US experience with the “Barbary Coast,” the present study confines itself to the 1801-05 war, which was recognized as such by both the legitimate political polities who were involved in it, and to the Battle of Derna, which took place in 1805.

performed by Muslim mercenaries on behalf of the United States. These mercenaries, who accounted for the great majority of the US-led force, are cast aside and denied any productive role in the history of US empire. Here, I situate historical and cultural representations of the Battle of Derna as examples of what Marita Sturken and others have called technologies of memory, products that “embody and generate memory and that are implicated in the power dynamics of memory’s production.”⁷ In the case of Derna, these generative devices range from historiographical accounts and newspaper articles to documentary film and military service journals. The power of these representations to shape attitudes and foreign policy is significant. As Sturken observes, “the way a nation remembers a war and constructs its history is directly related to how that nation further propagates war.”⁸ How historical and cultural producers remembered Derna in the past, then, shapes how the United States approaches Derna, and the whole of Libya, in the present. This productive capacity of memory is possible, as Susan Sontag points out, because what we call collective or national memory is actually an instructional device. Filtered through the variety of technologies of memory that this chapter examines, the Battle of Derna stipulates—it places demands on the present.⁹ As I conclude, commemorations of the Battle of Derna during the twentieth century were particularly important in the formation of US attitudes and approaches to the world that produced material consequences for North African Muslims during the War on Terror and US Overseas Contingency Operations beginning in 2001.

⁷ Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the Aids Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁹ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003), 86.

This chapter begins with a summary of the 1801-05 war between Tripoli, a regency of the Ottoman Empire, and the United States, including the causes and events of the war. Following this summary, I examine a selection of representations of the Battle of Derna from four distinct periods of historical and cultural memory. First, I locate memory of the Battle of Derna across the nineteenth century, invoked in poem and periodical as a backdrop for political tension and the crisis of slavery. Throughout the nineteenth century, commemorations of the Battle of Derna situated military exceptionalism as the core value of the nation. This strategy intensified following the end of the Civil War.¹⁰ Second, I analyze representations of the Battle of Derna in historiographical texts and newspaper articles from the period of the Second World. Beginning in the 1930s with the expansion of Italy and Germany, the Battle of Derna was remembered as a historic precedent for the exercise of US power overseas. Accounts of the battle helped to justify the United States' entry into the Second World War and provided a convenient script for the arrival of US forces in North Africa in 1942.¹¹ Third, I examine Cold War accounts of the battle, including films such as *Tripoli* (1950) and *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli* (1953). Following the end of the Second World War, the Battle of Derna remained a useful device for sustaining a militarized posture towards North Africa and

¹⁰ John Greenleaf Whittier, "Derne," in *The Writings of John Greenleaf Whittier* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1892). Joel Tyler Headley, "Eaton's Barbary Expedition," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 21, no. 124 (1860). Charles Chaillé-Long, "The American Soldier Abroad," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, October, 1887.

¹¹ Francis Rennell Rodd, *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea* (New York: Minton, Balch and Company, 1932). John A. Menaugh, "Stars and Stripes to Victory in North Africa," *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, May 10, 1936.

commemorations of the Battle of Derna reflect US Cold War policy in North Africa.¹² Finally, I conclude by examining representations of the Battle of Derna in the wake of the Cold War and during the War on Terror. I discuss journalistic history, novels, and defense contractor advertisements that used the War with Tripoli and the Battle of Derna as the standard origin story to explain the United States' historical experience in the Islamic world.¹³

Setting the Stage: The War with Tripoli, 1801-1805

Fought to insure the free passage of US commercial vessels through the Mediterranean, the War with Tripoli is often characterized as a struggle against Islamic pirates, rather than a legitimate political foe.¹⁴ In historical narratives that adopt this position, the pirate is portrayed as a figure who falls outside social and juridical order. To describe an enemy as falling outside society and the law is to deny that enemy both subjectivity and legal standing. To describe a foe as a pirate, therefore, is nothing more than a rhetorical move to dehumanize and delegitimize the opponent. Indeed, Tripolitan subjectivity and legal standing were the contested terrain of the war. Recognition of a valuable Tripolitan

¹² "O, Say, Can You See!," *The New York Times*, 5 November, 1950. E. A. V. de Candole, "Placing of Commemorative Plaque on Remains of American Fort at Derna, Cyrenaica to Mark Its Capture by American Marines in 1805," in, ed. Foreign Office (Benghazi 1950).

¹³ Michael L. S. Kitzen, *Tripoli and the United States at War: A History of American Relations with the Barbary States, 1785-1805* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1993). Frank Lambert, *The Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005).

¹⁴ In this regard, pirates and terrorists have much in common. The terrorist, after all, was figured by the Bush administration and others in many of the same ways that pirates had been figured when Thomas Jefferson was President—both were positioned as outside the bounds of the law and without rights, for example, Gerard W. Gawalt, "America and the Barbary Pirates: An International Battle against an Unconventional Foe," The Library of Congress, The Thomas Jefferson Papers, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/mjpre.html. Richard Zacks, *The Pirate Coast: Thomas Jefferson, the First Marines, and the Secret Mission of 1805* (New York: Hyperion, 2005). Robert Manning, "Learning from the Barbary Pirates," Atlantic Council, http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/learning-barbary-pirates.

territorial claim extending into the Mediterranean—a claim very much about sovereignty—was the disputed property of the war. It is best, then, to describe the War with Tripoli not as a fight against rightless and inhuman pirates, but as a rejection by the United States of the territorial claims made by a North African state beyond its coastline. Claims to coastal waters remain common, and in the nineteenth century it was not unusual for kingdoms like Tripoli to authorize agents to act on its behalf in enforcing these claims.¹⁵ These representatives are subsequently labeled pirates in order to deny them legal standing. Few investigators have been willing to recognize Tripolitan rights—over Mediterranean shipping lanes and to appoint agents to represent it— in the case of its war with the United States.

Kõla Fõlayan’s work on the history of Tripoli between 1795 and 1835 is invaluable for helping to contextualize the regency’s war against the United States. Fõlayan takes Tripolitan claims seriously, revealing many interesting details about the war that are often overlooked. For example, the “Barbary pirates” whom the United States complained about were actually Arab, Turkish, and European captains who sometimes performed diplomatic duties for the Tripolitan state in addition to their other work at sea.¹⁶ Most European countries recognized Tripolitan sovereignty and met their treaty obligations with the North African regency.¹⁷ And for some European powers, the

¹⁵ Since 1972, for example, Somalia has claimed territorial jurisdiction over waters extending 200 nautical miles into the India Ocean, well beyond the 12 miles generally held to be the standard under international law. Thilo Neumann and Tim Rene Salomon, "Fishing in Troubled Waters - Somalia’s Maritime Zones and the Case for Reinterpretation," *ASIL Insights* 16, no. 9 (2012).

¹⁶ Kõla Fõlayan, *Tripoli During the Reign of Yũsuf Pãshã Qaramãnli*, ed. I.A. Akinjogbin, Ife History Series (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1979), 27-28.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

“Barbary pirates” were often valuable allies.¹⁸ What is not disputed, even in US scholarship, is that the United States agreed to a treaty with Tripoli in 1796 but then failed to meet the financial obligations of the treaty in spite of many demands sent through diplomatic channels by Tripoli’s ruler, Yusuf Qaramanli. Offended by the apparent willingness of the United States to pay tribute to Algiers, another Ottoman regency, Qaramanli declared war on the United States in 1801.

In the United States, there was widespread support for the war. In 1800, a year before Tripoli declared war, the artist William Birch crafted “Preparation for War to defend Commerce,” a hand-colored engraving showing the construction of the USS *Philadelphia*—ultimately captured by the Tripolitans in 1803 and then destroyed in Tripoli’s harbor in 1804—to demonstrate the growing military capacities of the young republic.¹⁹ And in a letter that circulated widely in newspapers, William Bainbridge, the captain of the USS *George Washington*, argued against the continued payment of tribute money by the United States as part of its North African treaties. “Did the United States know the easy access of the barbarous coast called Barbary, the weakness of their garrisons, and the effeminacy of this people, I am sure they would not be long tributary to so pitiful a race of infidel.”²⁰ Inflamed by militarist rhetoric, and already in the possession of a small naval fleet built in the wake of a quasi-war with France in 1798, the Jefferson

¹⁸ A few Americans understood the political and social realities of North African privateering and the economic stakes for European and other powers; Benjamin Franklin, for instance, is reputed to have once said “I have in London heard it is a maxim among the merchants, that if there were no Algiers, it would be worth England’s while to build one.” Paul Michel Baepler, “The Barbary Captivity Narrative in Early America,” *Early American Literature* 30 (1995), 106.

¹⁹ William Russell Birch, *Preparation for War to Defend Commerce. The Swedish Church Southwark with the Building of the Frigate Philadelphia* (Washington, DC: The Library of Congress, 1800).

²⁰ William Bainbridge, “Algiers, 10th October 1800,” *Alexandria Times*, April 29, 1801.

administration responded to Tripoli's declaration of war by sending six frigates to the Mediterranean. Throughout 1803, Commodore Edward Preble maintained a blockade of Tripolitan ports and executed a campaign of raids and attacks against Tripolitan shipping.²¹ There were several missteps—when the *Philadelphia* was captured, so too was its entire crew—and little progress as a result of the blockade and attacks. As Fqlayan observes, Tripoli was able to evade the blockade quite easily, growing both its economy and its navy during the war.²²

At the same time that Preble's conduct of the naval war was having limited success forcing Tripoli to capitulate, the Jefferson administration was considering new options—both to conclude the war and ransom the crew of the *Philadelphia*, who were now held as prisoners of war. William Eaton, former Consul to Tunis, had recently returned to the United States convinced that the only way to ensure US commercial interests in the Mediterranean was for the US to intervene unilaterally and overthrow the Tripolitan government. Eaton had been lobbying Secretary of State James Madison, his boss at the Department of State, to this end for some time.²³ Eaton justified this plan by claiming that Tripoli's legitimate ruler, Ahmed Qaramanli, had been illegally deposed by his brother. By helping to return Ahmed to the throne, the United States would be

²¹ For a very useful overview of US naval operations, see Glenn Tucker, *Dawn Like Thunder: The Barbary Wars and the Birth of the U. S. Navy* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963).

²² Kqla Fqlayan, "Tripoli and the War with the U.S.A., 1801-5," *The Journal of African History* 13, no. 2 (1972), 267-270. Between 1801 and 1805, the Tripolitan navy grew from 11 to 24 ships. ———, *Tripoli During the Reign of Yūsuf Pāshā Qaramānlī*, 27-28.

²³ Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli* (Brookfield: E. Merriam & CO., 1813), 260-268.

righting a wrong.²⁴ The administration had enough faith in Eaton's plan and its legal and moral underpinnings to appoint the former consul as navy agent to the North African regency, sending him back to the Mediterranean along with Captain Samuel Barron, who was to take over command of the fleet from Preble.²⁵ The Navy provided Barron with \$20,000 for expenses related to the ongoing operation against Tripoli and recognizably vague directions for carrying out his mission:

With respect to the Ex-Bashaw of Tripoli, we have no objection to you availing yourself of his co-operation with you against Tripoli--if you shall upon a full view of the subject after your arrival upon the Station, consider his co-operation expedient. The subject is committed entirely to your discretion. In such an event you will, it is believed, find Mr. Eaton extremely useful to you.²⁶

Eaton intended to locate Ahmed, whom he had met several years earlier in Tunis, forge an alliance, and head towards Tripoli with a mercenary army meant to force Yusuf out of power to the benefit of the United States.

On the *Argus* in the Mediterranean, Eaton took command of a detachment of US Marines led by Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon. They traveled to Alexandria and then Cairo, where Eaton met with the Egyptian Viceroy.²⁷ Ahmed Qaramanli had taken refuge in Egypt among the former rulers of country, the Mamluks, who opposed the Viceroy and

²⁴ The real story is much more complicated and subtle. Ahmed had, in fact, recently been governor of Derna, but proved ineffectual as a ruler before departing for Malta and then Egypt. One source claims that Ahmed captured Derna in the spring of 1803 with the support of US naval forces. Chaillé-Long, "The American Soldier Abroad," 4. Chaillé-Long appears to confuse Ahmed's governorship of Derna, with the Jefferson administration's plan to send rifles, artillery, and \$40,000 to Ahmed in 1803. James A Field, Jr., *From Gibraltar to the Middle East: America and the Mediterranean World, 1776-1882*, New Edition. (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 1991), 350.

²⁵ Dudley W. Knox, ed. *Naval Documents Related to the United States Wars with the Barbary Powers: Naval Operations from April to September 6, 1804*, vol. IV, The Office of Naval Records and Library (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), 120, 152.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 153.

²⁷ At least one sources claims that Eaton met with Mehmed Ali. Chaillé-Long, "The American Soldier Abroad," 4. But Mehmed Ali had not yet been named Viceroy by the Ottoman government in Istanbul. Rather, Eaton met with Hurşid Pasha. Khaled Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali: From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), 23-26.

the Ottoman Sultan whom he represented. Once Eaton secured a firman—a kind of executive order—from the Viceroy assuring Qaramanli's safe passage out of Egypt, the party returned to Alexandria. On 4 March 1805, the two men signed a treaty stipulating the future relationship of the United States and the new Tripolitan government.²⁸ At Alexandria, Eaton, recruited a diverse group of about five-hundred mercenaries, including Greeks, Arabs, Albanians, and Britons.²⁹ This US-led force marched 520 miles across the desert and managed to reach Derna before reinforcements sent by Yusuf to stop the US invasion. Following a brief battle—preceded by a naval bombardment—Eaton's forces occupied and raised the US flag over the city. Meanwhile, Tobias Lear, Consul General in Algiers since 1803, concluded a treaty with Yusuf. After seven weeks of occupation, US forces, including Ahmed, his inner circle, and a group of Greek mercenaries were evacuated aboard a Navy frigate. The vast remainder of the mercenary army was left to fend for itself.

Back in the United States, Eaton was well received, but he publically condemned Lear's treaty—and thus Jefferson's policy. Further, he claimed he had not been properly

²⁸ This treaty remains a contentious point among historians. For those who claim that Eaton was betrayed by the government, the treaty is a binding document of the United States. See, Rodd, *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea*, 187. Most historians take a more pragmatic view of US policy, and suggest that Eaton may have overstepped his authority, or at least not realized the realpolitik at work. Fölayan recounts how Eaton forced Ahmed into signing the treaty by threatening to arrest him and take him to the United States. Fölayan, *Tripoli During the Reign of Yūsuf Pāshā Qaramānlī*, 37. Eaton's treaty with Ahmed also contains a secret clause that Yusuf, his family, and chief admiral would be handed over to the US at the conclusion of hostilities "to be held hostage." William Eaton and Ahmed Qaramanli, *Convention between the United States of America and His Highness Hamet Caramanly, Bashaw of Tripoli, God Is Infinite, February 23, 1805*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Tripoli, Libya, 1796-1885 (College Park, MD: National Archives II).

²⁹ Eaton says the army numbered about five hundred men, one-hundred Christians and four-hundred Muslim. Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*, 293.

reimbursed for the expenses occurred in his campaign to overthrow the Tripolitan government. In 1807, Eaton—who had been shot in the arm during the assault—complained, “you cannot bring back to me nine years of active life; you cannot restore to me the strength of an arm. But for actual disbursements for the benefit of our common country, whether voluntary or extorted, I have a right again to resort to your justice, and to believe that this justice will no longer be delayed.”³⁰ Eaton may have felt he had been treated as a mercenary by Jefferson, but he was not the one abandoned, unpaid, in Derna. Embraced by many, Eaton nevertheless rejected a future in party politics and shortly became embroiled in the Burr affair—he was among the first to whom Burr appealed for support in his attempt to seize Spanish territory in North America. Though Eaton was ultimately cleared of any role in the affair, at least one nineteenth-century historian reported of the affair, “suspicions remained in the minds of some, that he had listened too favorably to the seductive propositions of Burr.”³¹ Eaton drank heavily after all this. He was forty-eight when he died in 1811.

Remembering the Battle of Derna in the Nineteenth Century

DEVELOPING US EXCEPTIONALISM

As Jill Lepore points out in her discussion of the War with Philip (1675-78), memory sets its own terms, defining what is to be remembered and setting the tone for how to remember.³² The War with Tripoli is no exception to Lepore’s observation and the conflict with Tripoli was memorialized before it even ended. In *The Crescent*

³⁰ Ibid., 407.

³¹ Cornelius C. Felton, *Life of William Eaton*, ed. Jared Sparks, vol. IX, The Library of American Biography (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1838), 179.

³² Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*, 181-182.

Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815 (1995), Robert J. Allison charts the particular ways in which Americans remembered the War with Tripoli even as it was happening.³³ By the time the Battle of Derna took place in 1805, the war was already being imagined as a display of US power. Allison describes a review written by Washington Irving of the play *The Tripolitan Prize, or, American Tars on an English Shore* (1802). Irving's review is the only surviving account of the lost play, which concluded with a naval battle between the United States and Tripoli fought in the English Channel; as the two sides fight, a crowd gathers to witness the battle. This desire to demonstrate US power to audiences in the United Kingdom was an important plot element in 1802 because the United States and Great Britain remained at odds in North America; just twelve years later British forces burned Washington, DC to the ground. Allison also reveals that in 1805 Francis Scott Key wrote an anthem that he would rework into the more-familiar "Star Spangled Banner" nine years later during the war with Britain. One of the stanzas of this early version of the national anthem includes the lines "And pale beam'd the Crescent, its splendor obscur'd/By the light of the star-spangled flag of our nation./Where each flaming star gleam'd a meteor of war,/And the turban'd head bowed to the terrible glare."³⁴ As Allison points out, even before the war ended, Americans established a plotline that would be repeated over and over: "the Americans beat the Tripolitans because the Americans were true blue; the American

³³ Robert J. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 187-206.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 205.

sailors were enterprising as well as courageous, intelligent as well as strong.”³⁵ The moral of the play was that the militarized American body was superior to the Tripolitans, and strong enough to take on other opponents as well.

For its part, the Battle of Derna was also not forgotten. Commemorated widely across the nineteenth century, the lessons drawn from the battle ranged from the evils of slavery to the role of marginal labor in US empire.³⁶ Memorializations of Derna celebrated US exceptionalism and white supremacy while simultaneously othering North African Muslims—in the form of both the mercenary and the pirate. Derna may not be the origin point of US exceptionalism, but it has remained an important national lesson—more important, perhaps, than the war itself. The battle was remembered, and has subsequently been remembered, based on a series of closely-related readings of scant documentary evidence: Eaton’s description of the campaign, including some journal entries and a series of letters written for Commodores Preble and Barron and Captain Hull preserved in the William Eaton papers at the Huntington Library and in Volume IV, V, and VI of *Naval documents related to the United States wars with the Barbary powers* (United States Government Printing Office, 1942 and 1944).³⁷ Though he probably never saw *The Tripolitan Prize*—he was in the Mediterranean from 1798 to 1803—Eaton drew heavily from this exceptionalist narrative of national identity in his own

³⁵ Ibid., 188.

³⁶ Whittier, "Derne." Headley, "Eaton's Barbary Expedition." Chaillé-Long, "The American Soldier Abroad." Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*, 187-206.

³⁷ Among the holdings of the National Archives are Eaton’s letters written while he was a Consul at Tunis, as well as other selected letters from his time in the Mediterranean. Eaton made copies of all the letters he wrote.

correspondence and writing.³⁸ The preservation and repeated use of Eaton's letters and journal entries to account for the events on the road from Alexandria to Derna in 1805 has insured that Eaton's perspective remains the dominant version of events: fierce, pro-US, and manly. The regular exhumation of Eaton's body is nothing if not a national ritual, performed whenever US exceptionalism is challenged.

Across the nineteenth-century, Eaton figured prominently in national memory. Even before Eaton died, his biography—and the mercenary encounter at Derna—were widely known. For example, in 1807 the literary journal *The Polyanthos* published "Sketch of the Life of General William Eaton," detailing Eaton's role in US policy during the War with Tripoli and the aftermath of the Battle of Derna.³⁹ After Eaton's death in 1811, the Harvard-educated newspaper editor Charles Prentiss—a Federalist—was the first to curate Eaton's legacy. Prentiss anonymously compiled Eaton's letters as well as some brief commentary in *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several years an officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and other forces that marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and conquered the city of Derne, which led to the treaty of peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli* (1813). Already, the

³⁸ For a deeply instructive account of the ways in which Eaton gendered honor and slavery in his letters, see Lawrence A. Peskin, *Captives and Countrymen: Barbary Slavery and the American Public, 1785-1816* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 137-162. A useful analysis of the ways in which patriarchal bias on the part of Anglo-Americans in their observations of North Africa led to a decline in women's economic and legal rights in the West, see Marsha Renee Robinson, "Crossing the Strait from Morocco to the United States: The Transnational Gendering of the Atlantic World before 1830" (Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 2006). Robinson's analysis of Eaton on pgs. 279-84 is especially useful for thinking about the transmission of these misconceptions about Barbary gender to the United States during the republican period.

³⁹ "Sketch of the Life of General William Eaton," *The Polyanthos* 5 (1807).

technology and limitations of the press were being used to set the terms and tone of remembering. Prentiss acknowledged, “some things are perhaps omitted which many would deem of more importance than others which are inserted.” He concluded, “to please all was an impracticable task.”⁴⁰ Not everything Eaton had to say was included. Still, it was Eaton speaking. Prentiss also helped to establish the tone for remembering, as he somberly concluded his compilation with an 1808 ode by prominent Bostonian Robert Treat Paine and an 1812 poem by the Unitarian John Pierpont. Both Paine and Pierpont praised Eaton, but neither writer credited Eaton’s mercenary army for the victory at Derna. Likewise, at this stage of remembering, neither Paine nor Pierpont gave the US Marines or Christian Greeks any special role in the victory at Derna.⁴¹ Eaton, apparently, was the only man who mattered.

In 1838, Eaton was once more revived and given an extended treatment in Cornelius Felton’s *The Life of William Eaton*.⁴² Felton dedicates thirty-five pages of the biography to essentially rewording Eaton’s own account of recruiting a mercenary army, marching across the desert, and capturing and occupying Derna. Felton’s text is one volume in the “Library of American Biography series,” edited by Jared Sparks. Felton and Sparks were both prominent historians who eventually served as presidents of Harvard. Their role in insuring that Eaton was remembered as a significant figure in US history cannot be underestimated. Eaton, however, was not the only element of the Battle

⁴⁰ Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*, iv.

⁴¹ Ibid. Four years after he remembered Eaton, Pierpont published his famous *Airs of Palestine: A Poem*.

⁴² Felton, *Life of William Eaton*.

of Derna being remembered during the nineteenth century. Derna itself, the city, was also a significant element being produced by memory.

The production of space is perhaps most obvious in one of the nineteenth-century's most notable memorializations of the battle, the poem "Derne," penned in 1850 by John Greenleaf Whittier, a Massachusetts Quaker poet and editor of the abolitionist newspaper *The National Era*. The eight stanza poem includes a preface in which Whittier explains the origin of his poem:

The storming of the city of Derne, in 1805, by General Eaton, at the head of nine Americans, forty Greeks, and a motley array of Turks and Arabs, was one of those feats of hardihood and daring which have in all ages attracted the admiration of the multitude. The higher and holier heroism of Christian self-denial and sacrifice, in the humble walks of private duty, is seldom so well appreciated.

The poem, however, is not simply about Eaton or the Battle of Derna. Whittier invoked Christian heroism in a context that would be very familiar to his US audience in 1850—slavery. Whittier's poem celebrates the release of the crew of the *Philadelphia* from captivity in order to highlight abolitionists' desire to free a different group of captives: enslaved people of African descent in the United States. Whittier's comparison—Barbary captivity to chattel slavery in the United States—was a common abolitionist tactic according to Lotfi Ben Rejeb.⁴³ Whittier's take on captivity and slavery, as well as the poem's Orientalist geography, are worth a closer look.

As Edward Said observes, Orientalist writers "restructured the Orient by their art and made its colors, lights, and people visible through their images, rhythms, and

⁴³ Lotfi Ben Rejeb, "America's Captive Freeman in North Africa: The Comparative Method in Abolitionist Persuasion," *Slavery & Abolition* 9, no. 1 (1988).

motifs.”⁴⁴ In the case of Derna, Whittier’s poem structures the Oriental city as a penetrable, racialized space. The poem’s first verse establishes the setting for the daring feat that ended the war, thus freeing the US sailors:

1. NIGHT on the city of the Moor!
On mosque and tomb, and white-walled shore,
On sea-waves, to whose ceaseless knock
The narrow harbor-gates unlock,
On corsair's galley, carack tall,
And plundered Christian caraval!
The sounds of Moslem life are still;
No mule-bell tinkles down the hill;
Stretched in the broad court of the khan,
The dusty Bornou caravan
Lies heaped in slumber, beast and man;
The Sheik is dreaming in his tent,
His noisy Arab tongue o'erspent;
The kiosk's glimmering lights are gone,
The merchant with his wares withdrawn;
Rough pillowed on some pirate breast,
The dancing-girl has sunk to rest;
And, save where measured footsteps fall
Along the Bashaw's guarded wall,
Or where, like some bad dream, the Jew
Creeps stealthily his quarter through,
Or counts with fear his golden heaps,
The City of the Corsair sleeps!

This literary description of Derna, imagined as totally foreign and occupied by Sheiks, merchants, dancing girls, pirates, and Jews, was still legible to Americans in 1850 thanks to the continuing popularity of stories and novels set on the Barbary Coast, including novels like Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Alexandre Dumas’ *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1845).

The essentially foreign space of Derna established—above all else, *Oriental*—Whittier describes what is out of place in this scene: enslaved Christians from the United

⁴⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 22.

States. To do so, he collapses North African geography and relocates the captive sailors from the city of Tripoli to Derna, which will soon be liberated by the US mercenary force.

2. But where yon prison long and low
Stands black against the pale star-glow,
Chafed by the ceaseless wash of waves,
There watch and pine the Christian slaves;
Rough-bearded men, whose far-off wives
Wear out with grief their lonely lives;
And youth, still flashing from his eyes
The clear blue of New England skies,
A treasured lock of whose soft hair
Now wakes some sorrowing mother's prayer;
Or, worn upon some maiden breast,
Stirs with the loving heart's unrest.

Whittier makes no distinction between captives—the US sailors whose absence is written on the bodies of women in the United States—and slaves—black chattel in the United States. They are all simply enslaved. By dissolving the historical and legal particularities of each case—the US sailors as prisoners of war, held by a legitimate sovereign and the ownership of enslaved Africans and their future offspring in a system at the very heart of the Atlantic world and US history—Whittier succeeded in generating sympathy for the abolitionist cause.

In spite of all its good intentions, Whittier's poem others North African Muslims and situates their abjection as the origin of US exceptionalism; the Orientalist tropes in which Whittier traffics assume the supremacy of US manhood in the East. Whittier's portrayal of violence against North African Muslims, and the poem's promise of that violence as a solution to conflict, is a distinct example of US Orientalism. Some of the

poem's most evocative language comes in stanzas six and seven, where Whittier describes the battle and its aftermath:

6. Vain, Moslem, vain thy lifeblood poured
So freely on thy foeman's sword!
Not to the swift nor to the strong
The battles of the right belong;
For he who strikes for Freedom wears
The armor of the captive's prayers,
And Nature proffers to his cause
The strength of her eternal laws;
While he whose arm essays to bind
And herd with common brutes his kind
Strives evermore at fearful odds
With Nature and the jealous gods,
And dares the dread recoil which late
Or soon their right shall vindicate.

7. 'T is done, the horned crescent falls
The star-flag flouts the broken walls
Joy to the captive husband! joy
To thy sick heart, O brown-locked boy!
In sullen wrath the conquered Moor
Wide open flings your dungeon-door,
And leaves ye free from cell and chain,
The owners of yourselves again.
Dark as his allies desert-born,
Soiled with the battle's stain, and worn
With the long marches of his band
Through hottest wastes of rock and sand,
Scorched by the sun and furnace-breath
Of the red desert's wind of death,
With welcome words and grasping hands,
The victor and deliverer stands!

As it had been for Francis Scott Key early in the nineteenth century when he celebrated the US naval bombardment of an unnamed Tripolitan city, the Oriental city remained a racialized site open to the penetration of masculinized violence; national fantasies about the self and other could safely be acted out on the historic stage of the war. The Battle of

Derna was figured as one of the nation's most ancient battles fought for a right cause—to free enslaved Christians—from which the country could draw the inspiration to end its own system of enslavement.

Though he acknowledges the “motley array of Turks and Arabs” in his introduction, like nearly all US chroniclers of the Battle of Derna, Whittier focuses on the abjection of Islam and valorization of Christian labor, keeping alive the myth of the United States as a nation constructed by the labor of Christians. Contrary to his positioning of the poem as the recounting of an expedition against Barbary captivity, the feat of “hardihood and daring” Whittier describes was above all an act of war meant to force the ruler of Tripoli to relinquish his claim to tribute from Mediterranean shipping lanes. By ignoring the reasons why the crew of *Philadelphia* was in the Mediterranean to begin with, Whittier presented war as humanitarianism just a decade before the US Civil War.

On the eve of Abraham Lincoln's presidential election in 1860, former New York Secretary of State Joel T. Headley published his own account Eaton's mission in a sixteen-page article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Headley used strong language to condemn US “intermeddling with the internal affairs of other states,” while at the same time using the war to paint a picture of a strong national culture. Headley claimed that the War with Tripoli accomplished very little, yet the Battle of Derna was worth recognizing because “for energy, high courage, indomitable resolution, as well as the scenery amidst which it was carried out, and the characters that formed it, it [Eaton's mission] stands alone among the marvelous adventures and expeditions with which the American annals

are crowded.” Headley claimed the events leading up to the Battle of Derna had never been fully detailed—it is unclear if he read the 1828 account of the war. Headley placed Eaton at the center of his attempt to remedy this oversight, emphasizing Eaton’s racial superiority: “Eaton led an army of wild Arabs over an untrodden desert, and through barbaric tribes that had never before seen the face of a white man.” Headley praised Eaton for his manly style of diplomacy, saying he “was of the Jackson type, scorning all diplomacy except the simple truth.” Headley demonstrated Eaton’s manliness by recounting how the former consul, like a true man of his time, whipped his French advisor in public and kicked a Jew down a set of stairs.⁴⁵ In addition to praising Eaton’s manliness, Headley also focused more heavily than previous writers on the trope of uncooperative Muslim mercenaries, whom he says wanted to turn back, and the cooperative Christian Greeks, whom he says stood side-by-side with the Eaton and the Marines at every twist in the tale.

We can pause here to ask why the mercenaries in question might have been uncooperative? First, not all of them were. Only a select minority of the enlistees threatened to abandon the expedition, and even then most of the problems centered on pay and rations. In the end, of course, the bulk of the mercenary army that Eaton and Ahmed recruited went unpaid and were abandoned in Derna, hundreds of miles from Alexandria. But rather than recognize the labor disputes involved in the march, Headley chooses to make these disputes racial and religious in nature. The mercenaries—except for the Greeks—are a “half savage, wild, and lawless crowd.” The Muslims are

⁴⁵ Joel Tyler Headley, “Eaton’s Barbary Expedition,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 21, no. 124 (1860): 497.

“picturesque, yet fierce looking riders” and “wandering savages” who have circled around a “compact little knot of Americans,” who are clearly “disciplined troops.” The “ample turbans, loose flowing robes, and disorderly movements” of the North Africans contrast with the “close-fitting uniforms and exact military movements” of the US Marines, leading Headley to conclude that the scene was “a perfect illustration of the different characters of the two races.”⁴⁶ The two sides, Muslim and Christian, are marked by extreme difference, and this difference is embodied and militarized.

Headley claimed the United States succeeded because “Eaton was dogged and savage” and the Americans showed no patience for the “treachery, falsehood, and childish peevishness of their allies.” Describing one of the more tense disputes during the march, Headley writes:

The swarthy, wild-clad masses seemed able, by mere force of numbers, to crush Eaton and his few companions to the earth; but awed by the moral power of that handful of fearless, self-collected men, they paused and hesitated to advance further. For half an hour Eaton and his group of officers on one side, and that host of untamed barbarians on the other stood looking at each other without saying a word. It was a thrilling spectacle to see the Moselm and Christian thus standing breast to breast, and witness the silent, motionless struggle between civilization, backed by a handful of men, and barbarism, with a host to give it countenance.⁴⁷

Finally, and in spite of all these challenges to their manhood, the Americans arrived in Derna, and “by four o'clock the battle was over, and the strange spectacle was witnessed of the American flag floating over a foreign fortress and a fortified city.” Headley says, “time has not diminished the novelty of that event, and at this day it stands alone and unique in our history.” Headley’s historical narrative, in which Arabs refused to fight the superior Americans, ultimately ends with Lear betraying his country in order to best

⁴⁶ Headley, “Eaton's Barbary Expedition,” 498-499.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 503.

Eaton, and Eaton breaking down, crying “*My God, what shall I do with the poor fellows who have followed my fortunes through the desert!*” [emphasis in original]⁴⁸ The government's failure to reimburse Eaton subsequently cuts short his life. Headley concludes, “men of such executive force and indomitable resolution are not so plentiful that they can be sacrificed to meanness and incapacity.”⁴⁹

Headley's efforts to situate the Battle of Derna as the site of encounter between civilized American bodies and barbarism, as well as a moral lesson in the need to be savage in dealing with savage races, exemplifies a particular approach to colonialism and imperialism that stretches across European settler-colonial history in the Americas, from Columbus's first encounter with the natives of the Caribbean to Benjamin's Church's destruction of the Narragansett and relentless pursuit of Philip through New England swamps in 1676.⁵⁰ There can be little doubt that Headley's article, published in one of the nineteenth century's most popular periodicals, figures and bears responsibility for inciting further US violence.⁵¹ It is unclear, though, only a year before the Civil War, if

⁴⁸ Ibid., 507-508.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 511.

⁵⁰ David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*.

⁵¹ Not long after Whittier and Headley produced their memorials of the battle, the Barbary Coast materialized in the United States, drawing on the outsider status of the pirate coast and generating spatial configurations that would eventually draw the attention of social reformers. Between 1860 and 1930, numerous “Barbary Coast” red-light districts sprang up across the United States, negotiated into being by barmen, prostitutes, law enforcement figures, and politicians. The most famous Barbary Coast in the United States was in San Francisco and earned its name in the 1860s, during the years that the city was rapidly urbanizing. San Francisco was not alone; even the small town of Grand Junction in Western Colorado could boast its own Barbary Coast at the turn of the twentieth century. The atmosphere of these red-light districts made them a threat to the all-encompassing political economy of industrial capitalism, which demanded temperance and sexual reproduction within the confines of the middle-class family. There was simply no space within the modern United States for places like these and by the 1920s the period of the American Barbary was coming to an end as reformers successfully dismantled red-light districts across the United States. The American Barbary was, for a time, a site of agency for the people who circulated there.

Headley's criticism of intermeddling in the affairs of others is whole-hearted. He compares Eaton and his army favorably to the filibusters, who had engaged in their schemes only a decade earlier. For the generations who fought in and remembered the US Civil War, this comparison—Eaton to the filibusters—would remain a useful device for celebrating US militarism as well as expressing their disappointment after their service had ended.

In 1887, Charles Chaillé-Long—who worked as a mercenary in Egypt in the 1870s⁵²—invoked Derna as a way of protesting his own treatment by the government, which he believed had overlooked his Egyptian service. Writing in “The American Soldier Abroad,” published in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, Long used Eaton as one example of “indifference which has now grown into policy.” Long hoped for a time “not far distant when the Government shall awaken to a better appreciation of its obligations and its duties to the citizen who has done the state a service.”⁵³ Long, who was bitter because believed that he had been denied government employment because of petty jealousies, concluded that Eaton's faith that he would be reimbursed was “misplaced.” The government, Long said, “turned him [Eaton] adrift to die of mortification and

Nostalgia for the American Barbary is evident in the titles of early silent films, including *Last Night of the Barbary Coast* (1915) and *Midnight on the Barbary Coast* (1929). In the United States, then, the evocation of the Barbary Coast was both an act of resistance to industrialization and the clock-work rhythms of modernity, as well as an unacceptable manifestation of the foreign and of the lawlessness associated with the pirate coast. One example of the tension and shifting ground between nostalgia and abjection in representations of the American Barbary is the reissue of the 1935 film *Barbary Coast* in 1954 as *Port of Wickedness*. Later films starring Clark Gable and John Wayne continued to capitalize on both the lasciviousness and sense of loss surrounding San Francisco's Barbary Coast. Films like *San Francisco* (1936) and *Flame of Barbary Coast* (1945) provided an excellent stage on which to demonstrate the masculinity of characters like Gable and Wayne at mid-century.

⁵² See Chapter Three of this dissertation.

⁵³ Chaillé-Long, “The American Soldier Abroad,” 2.

chagrin.” Eaton, whom Long compared favorably to the filibuster William Walker, “added lustre to the American name.”⁵⁴ Yet Long complained:

Such as these, in Europe, are accounted heroes, to whom pæans are sung and monuments constructed, to the end that a spirit of patriotism and national pride may be engendered and encouraged. In America, alas! The State owes them nothing, and, save a favored few, does not deign even the poor tribute of a monument upon which might be written: *Aux grands hommes la national reconnaissance*.⁵⁵

But Eaton, as we have seen, had not been forgotten. While he may have been looked upon as an annoyance by the government, Eaton was well remembered in formations of national memory both before and after the Civil War.

In 1881, *United Service: A Quarterly Review of Military and Naval Affairs* published Edward Shippen’s account of the Battle of Derna.⁵⁶ Like John Greenleaf Whittier, Shippen deployed Orientalist tropes to describe Derna and establish the setting for the battle. “The streets of the town, which contains some good houses, are, like those of most places in Barbary, narrow, irregular, and filled with the filth and rubbish which seems indispensable to Arab comfort and happiness.” The anachronism of Orientalism is evident in Shippen’s description. “So little do such towns change, that the traveler of to-day looks upon much the same scene as was presented to Eaton’s eyes when he looked down upon the little city in the spring of 1805.”⁵⁷ Shippen also commented on the mercenary army. “The ill-assorted *personnel* of the expedition appears to have caused difficulty from the very first, as might reasonably be supposed.” No doubt, Shippen, a

⁵⁴ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁶ E. Shippen, “A Forgotten General,” *United Service: A Quarterly Review of Military and Naval Affairs* 5, no. 1 (1881). Shippen, the Medical Director of the US Navy, was a frequent contributor to the journal.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 3.

professional soldier, was commenting on the perceived loyalty of the mercenary soldier. At this point, though, Shippen makes no distinction between the religion of the mercenaries and he claims that at one point half the Christians threatened to mutiny.⁵⁸ At times, Shippen plagiarizes Eaton's letters. But perhaps plagiarism of Eaton is inevitable, as writers continue to draw on so few sources to build such a rich Orientalist world and tale of US exceptionalism. Shippen also invokes the somber tone that Prentiss inaugurated in 1813, opening and closing his article with excerpts from Pierpont and Paine. In 1895, *United Service* republished Shippen's article with no changes or additions, testifying to the popularity of repeatedly remembering the Battle of Derna with little or no alteration.⁵⁹ Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Battle of Derna was consistently remembered as a demonstration of US exceptionalism: American men—especially soldiers—were superior to others, the United States had humbled an Oriental despot, and the Mediterranean was a natural receptacle for US power.

Remembering the Battle of Derna in the Twentieth Century

1928 TO 1945

US exceptionalism continued to be the dominant rhetoric structuring twentieth-century commemorations of the Battle of Derna. In *The New England Journal* in 1928, John Hunter Sedgwick could still justify nineteenth-century US aggression against Tunis, Tripoli, and Algeria by describing them as “three bullies, who when a child passed with a

⁵⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁵⁹ ———, “A Forgotten Journal,” *United Service: A Quarterly Review of Military and Naval Affairs* 13, no. 6 (1895).

little candy, pounced on it.”⁶⁰ In 1805, the three bullies were Algeria, Tripolitania, and Tunis. But in the 1930s, the United States identified a new trio of bullies. By remembering Derna, the United States was able to justify its entry into wars with German, Italy, and Japan. The battle was recalled in the years leading up to the Second World War as a way to end US isolationism from European affairs—in essence to reject the Monroe Doctrine, and to consider military intervention—a direct contradiction of Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy. In this section, I read a series of historiographical debates and newspaper reports that positioned the Battle of Derna as the origin point of US power overseas.

In 1932, Francis Rennell Rodd, an English soldier, diplomatist, and future president of the Royal Geographic Society, published *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea*. Rodd’s account of Eaton’s role in US Mediterranean policy between 1795 and 1805 drew on existent primary and secondary literature and was unremarkable in all but one way: with the British Empire and the colonial order threatened, Rodd desired Anglo-American unity to counter Japanese and German expansion in Asia, Europe, and elsewhere.⁶¹ Rodd explained that he chose Eaton (and therefore Derna), rather than the larger war, as the focus of his book because “[Eaton’s role] in the Mediterranean policy of the years 1795-1805 has not been properly recognized even in America.”⁶² Rodd deployed language strikingly similar to Joseph Conrad’s in *Heart of*

⁶⁰ John Hunter Sedgwick, "William Eaton, a Sanguine Man," *The New England Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (1928).

⁶¹ Rodd, *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea*. Rodd admitted his work was far from original, setting a precedent that is with us to the present day. In his Foreword, Rodd rejected the doctrine that “Englishmen and Americans are further apart from each other than Englishmen are from Continental Europeans” (v).

⁶² *Ibid.*, vi.

Darkness (1899) in order to connect Eaton's mission to Western imperialism in general: "Eaton was the figure that really mattered because he had an idea. It was a great and ambitious idea, but it failed."⁶³ As with Kurtz in the Congo, the idea alone redeemed Eaton's adventurer in Tripoli. Eaton's idea, of course, was the invasion and occupation of Tripoli and the installation of a puppet government under US influence. Rodd followed earlier writers who blamed the failure of US intervention on US officials' refusal to act in good faith to satisfy Eaton's plan and install Ahmed as the head of state in Tripoli. In short, these commentators believed that the contemporary United States suffered from a similar weakness: too much committed to diplomacy, too little committed to war. In his review of Rodd's book in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, the eminent Orientalist A.S. Tritton echoed Rodd's point: "Eaton had a policy; one can hardly say as much for the American Government and its commanders in the Mediterranean."⁶⁴ Rodd and Tritton were describing the Mediterranean of 1805, but they may as well have been talking about the Mediterranean of 1932. The British desire for a strong US foreign policy in the 1930s would shortly become less veiled and more urgent as German and Italian military capabilities in Europe expanded, posing a threat to the United Kingdom.

Still, some in the United States resisted using Tripoli as an example of the need to sometimes intervene militarily in foreign affairs. The British call for direct and sustained intervention, born from a long period of overseas colonialism, appeared misguided to

⁶³ Ibid. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*, ed. Paul B. Armstrong, A Norton Critical Edition. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), 7.

⁶⁴ A. S. Tritton, "Review of General William Eaton. By F. Rennell Rodd.," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 7, no. 3 (1934).

American reviewer Charles Lee Lewis, a historian at the United States Naval Academy, who pointed out that Rodd's nationality made him incapable of understanding the disinterestedness of the United States in empire. Lewis drew a different lesson from the War with Tripoli:

One might take issue with the author's statement (p. 275), as follows: 'If Preble had continued in command, the dream of a Barbary prince under American control: a Protectorate perhaps: a sphere of influence certainly: might have come true - and with these, a great career for Eaton.' This is the interpretation to be expected from an Englishman; but in Eaton's case, not the slightest evidence is produced by the author prove that Eaton's 'great idea' was anything other than a plan for hastening the close of the war with Tripoli with honorable terms of peace for his country.⁶⁵

Lewis's conclusion that the Battle of Derna was not about US empire relies on a reading of history in which Eaton only wished to provoke a diplomatic solution to the conflict with Tripoli, rather than establish a strong presence in the region. This reading is not supported based on documentary evidence of the war, and depends on the trope of disinterestedness in empire that often accompanies the rhetoric of US exceptionalism and empire. Eaton certainly desired a US-friendly regime in Tripoli, and the Jefferson administration was willing to go to some length to make that happen. By continuing to position the War with Tripoli as one of self-defense against an abject aggressor violating US rights on the high seas, rather than a US-led invasion of a sovereign territory, American commentators were able to disavow the nation's imperial tendencies and preach isolationism. The exceptionalism of these narratives, however, could just as easily be flipped to justify intervention.

⁶⁵ Charles Lee Lewis, "Review of General William Eaton, the Failure of an Idea. By Francis Rennell Rodd.," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 19, no. 4 (1933). Another review described Eaton's expedition as "thrilling," an appraisal that continues to the present day. M.N., "Review of General William Eaton: The Failure of an Idea by Francis Rennell Rodd," *The Geographical Journal* 81, no. 6 (1933).

In Europe, North Africa, and elsewhere, war continued to smolder, burning through the policy of isolationism in the United States. By the middle of the decade, the War with Tripoli was retooled as the preeminent guide for the upcoming war against Italy and Germany in North Africa and the struggle for global hegemony that would follow. A May 10, 1936 feature on the making of America in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* detailed the events leading up the Battle of Derna (Illustration 1).⁶⁶ “Stars and Stripes to Victory in North Africa” described the successful capture of the city of Derna in 1805 by US forces, introducing readers unacquainted with the Tripolitan War to the Barbary Coast of North Africa, a morally suspect stretch of coast dominated by piracy and slavery. The story repeats the standard historiographical account of the war, focusing on Eaton’s march across the dessert and the heroics of the few Americans who fought in the battle. The article circulated widely, once again reminding Americans that the 1805 battle was the origin of US power abroad. The *Tribune* staff juxtaposed John A. Menaugh’s account of the Battle of Derna with Whittier’s poem—Rodd had similarly concluded his book with the poem in 1932—in order to illustrate the importance of the Battle of Derna throughout US history, and not just in 1805 and 1936.

In just six years, the United States would once again find itself engaged in a war in North Africa. In the midst of the largest overseas military campaign the country had ever undertaken, writers brushed aside the fact that most of the soldiers fighting in the Battle of Derna on the side of the United States were not Americans. The labor of Muslims from across the Ottoman world was displaced in favor of the well-recognized

⁶⁶ Menaugh, “Stars and Stripes to Victory in North Africa.”

trope of US exceptionalism and heroic white masculinity set against piratical foes. Officials recognized the ascendant importance of this narrative of US power as early as 1934, when the US Congress authorized the creation of an archive of documents related to the War with Tripoli. In 1939 the first of six volumes was published. The final volume was released in 1944, at the height of the war in Europe.⁶⁷ Elsewhere, in 1942, *The Scientific Monthly* published an account of the United States' "attempt to clean out this nest of pirates and slavers," observing that once again the United States had focused its "great searchlight" upon the North African shores of the Mediterranean.⁶⁸ And in Julia Macleod and Louis Wright's *The First Americans in North Africa; William Eaton's Struggle for a Vigorous Policy against the Barbary Pirates, 1799-1805* (1945) the storyline remained much the same as it had for over one-hundred years: "the first adventure of American forces on North African soil occurred in 1805," against "the corsairs who from time immemorial had preyed on Mediterranean commerce and exacted tribute from all nations."⁶⁹ Here, "time immemorial" designates the anachronistic space of the Barbary coast, which the United States finally mastered—before Europe—because of the exceptional character of the nation. Macleod and Wright drew a very clear picture of the line between the United States and "seagoing gangsters" of the nineteenth-century Barbary Coast.⁷⁰ *The First Americans in North Africa* was maligned by *The Mississippi*

⁶⁷ This collection would become the basis for Glenn Tucker's *Dawn Like Thunder: The Barbary Wars and the Birth of the U. S. Navy* (1963), one of the more exhaustive and accurate accounts of the war. Tucker's book is the standard reference work for recent narratives that commemorate the war.

⁶⁸ Thomas E. La Fargue, "America's African Odyssey," *The Scientific Monthly* 55, no. 4 (1942), 369.

⁶⁹ Louis B. Wright and Julia H. Macleod, *The First Americans in North Africa; William Eaton's Struggle for a Vigorous Policy against the Barbary Pirates, 1799-1805* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945), v.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Valley Historical Review and the *Pacific Historical Review* but *The English Historical Review* took a more moderate approach and the Reviewers in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *The American Historical Review*, and *Military Affairs* all recognized the book's contemporary relevance, which could not escape anyone familiar with the quick realignment of colonial power in post-war Africa and the Middle East.⁷¹ While the Battle of Derna had been relevant in the lead up to the Second World War because it was a precedent for US intervention abroad, after the Second World War Derna became useful in figuring the Cold War because it demonstrated the long interventionist tradition of the nation. The myth of isolation was finally exploded.

THE COLD WAR

On July 4, 1950, three platoons of US Marines marched through the streets of Derna, Cyrenaica, and assembled on a hill just above the town. On the eve of Libyan independence, the US Marines were once more in North Africa as a visual display of Western power, invited by the British colonial administrators of Cyrenaica to commemorate the Battle of Derna. The next day, eight thousand miles away, US forces fought their first battle of the Korean War.⁷² While the Korean War continues to occupy a cherished spot in the historiography of the Cold War, the commemorative ceremony at Derna is nearly forgotten. In Derna to commemorate an old war in Africa, rather than fight a new one in Asia, the Marines who marched through the old city that day are

⁷¹The First World War resulted in similar disruptions, as several colonies were handed over to Britain and France by Germany and Italy. On this vital period, 1935 to 1948, see Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷² First argues that the War in Korea forced the United States to take the political situation in Libya more seriously. Ruth First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1974), 67.

nevertheless a significant marker of US memory during the Cold War. Cold War exceptionalism—anti-communist imperialism—frequently depended on the Battle of Derna for its script.

Following the Second World War, it briefly seemed possible that the United States might reduce its military capabilities. Total active duty military personnel declined, and the number of US bases outside the United States dropped from nearly 2000 in 1945 to just over 1000 in 1947. By 1949, the number dropped to less than 600. But after 1950, the trend reversed and the number of US bases overseas began to rise. By 1953 the US operated 815 bases abroad, a number that would rise to over 1000 by 1967.⁷³ At the same time that it professed to be devoted to democracy, the United States choose to expand its military capabilities, which it justified by making the claim that militarization was necessary in order to protect capitalism from the global threat posed by communism and Third World revolutionary movements; democracy could only be protected if the United States was the strongest kid on the block.⁷⁴ In the aftermath of the war, the US undertook a strategy for global domination that had been outlined in the pre-war years, beginning with short term occupations of former Axis nations accompanied by capitalist development programs administered by a host of new global financial instruments.⁷⁵ At the same time, the United States continued to spend lavishly on military

⁷³ James R. Blaker, *United States Overseas Basing : An Anatomy of the Dilemma* (New York: Praeger, 1990).

⁷⁴ See, for example, Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*.

⁷⁵ On the geography of mid-century US expansion, see Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization*, California Studies in Critical Human Geography (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). To argue that these occupations ever ended, however, is to overlook the continued presence of US military bases in places like Italy, Germany, and Japan. All three became important US outposts following the end of the Second World War.

technologies at home, including weapons systems, education, and bureaucracy.⁷⁶

Derna—the memory of the battle and the city itself—became a useful site for sustaining the militarized posture of the Cold War in North Africa and elsewhere.

In 1950, Libya, the nation which the *New York Times* would shortly label the world's poorest, did not yet exist.⁷⁷ Libyan unification came after a long period of fiercely-resisted occupation beginning when Italy invaded the former Ottoman regency in 1911. In *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (1974), Ruth First described the 32-year Italian occupation as “the most severe occupation experienced by an Arab country in modern times.”⁷⁸ Following the capture of North Africa from Italy and Germany the end of the war in 1945, what materialized were three provinces: Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, administered by the British, and Fezzan, administered by the French. But colonial rule was challenged by independence movements in the Sudan, Algeria, Egypt, and elsewhere in the 1950s. And the will of the General Assembly of the United Nations was also against continued colonial rule. In spite of independence, as Matthew Connelly points out, “[t]he region’s [the Maghreb’s] location ensured that it was always a factor in European defense planning.”⁷⁹ Libya was one of the first nations to establish independence, yet of European and NATO schemes to continue exercising power after decolonization, Connelly concludes, “it [Libya] was also the first of many to pass under

⁷⁶ Chalmers A. Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire : Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*, 1st. (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt, 2004).

⁷⁷ "Grim Independence Attained by Libya," *The New York Times*, December 25, 1951. The Greeks had previously used “Libyē” to refer to the Mahghreb, and the Italians had applied the name to the territory of the three provinces beginning in 1911.

⁷⁸ First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 45.

⁷⁹ Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 43.

more informal methods of imperial management that had been revived from an earlier era to suit anticolonial sensibilities.”⁸⁰ As the United Kingdom and France began to shift their imperial strategy from direct rule to embedded liberalism, a form of domination based on economic rather than military instruments, the British adviser to the Cyrenaican Ministry of the Interior thought that staging a commemorative ceremony at Derna would be a good way to draw US attention to the region and demonstrate the ongoing interest of the Western powers in the region.⁸¹

Following the end of the Second World War, North Africa was important not just because of its significance to the American past, but also because it was significant to the American future, with the decline of British power and the inauguration of the Cold War. The Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, and Middle Eastern oil were all imagined as threatened resources, which needed protection from falling into the “wrong hands”—the Soviet Union, but also socialist and nationalist independence movements across the Third World. Thus the United States had significant interests in North Africa, but preferred the British and French to handle day-to-day administration and policing in the region. Paul Zingg explains that during the early years of the Cold War, the United States identified “the so-called colonial powers” in Africa as allies in the global struggle against communism.”⁸² As Connelly observes, the United States “alternated between exploiting [the Maghreb] as both a fallback position and platform for airpower to merely denying it

⁸⁰ Ibid. Adrian Pelt, *Libyan Independence and the United Nations; a Case of Planned Decolonization*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

⁸¹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 55-56.

⁸² Paul J. Zingg, "The Cold War in North Africa: American Foreign Policy and Postwar Muslim Nationalism, 1945-1962," *Historian* 39, no. 1 (1976), 54.

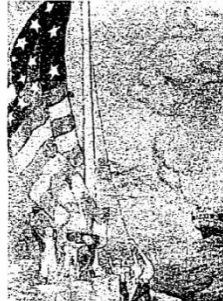
to the Soviets.”⁸³ In the charged atmosphere of the Cold War and facing down

O, Say, Can You See!

The Stars and Stripes rose recently beyond Pyongyang, the captured capital of North Korea, adding another picture to the many which have illustrated the story of the flag, over the years, at home and abroad. Here are records of a few of those historic flag-raisings.



June 28, 1776: Sgt. William Jasper defies the British Fleet's fire to fly the rebel flag above Fort Moultrie.



Apr. 27, 1805: U. S. Marines, after bombarding Derna, Tripoli, raise the colors above the pirate town.



July 1, 1898: Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War plant the flag in the assault on San Juan Hill.



Dec. 17, 1918: After World War I, the U. S. flag flew over the fort of Ehrenbreitstein on the Rhine.



Feb. 25, 1945: The spectacular flag-raising on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima Island, in World War II.



Oct. 20, 1950: U. S. paratroopers lift the flag in pinning down the North Korean forces in Pyongyang.

decolonization movements across the world, the

Marines' march through Derna in 1950

demonstrated that the United States had clearly

assumed a leading military role in the colonial

world.

By November of 1950, the *New York*

Times was able to illustrate the history of the

United States with a collection of images of the

US flag being raised over a series of locations

beginning with Fort Moultrie in 1776, then Derna

in 1805, and ultimately Pyongyang in 1950.⁸⁴ The

images in the *Times*—including Santiago de Cuba,

which would shortly fall into communist hands—

celebrated US responses to what the paper

presented as cases of unprovoked aggression. For

example, the *Times*' caption described Derna as “a

Illustration 1: “O, Say, Can You See!”

⁸³ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era*, 43. Following the Second World War, the United States competed against France and Italy as the three vied for commercial and military hegemony in North Africa. The US was especially interested in maintaining control of its only African military outpost, Nouasseur Air Base in Morocco. Beginning in 1951, the United States deployed nuclear bombers there as part of the Strategic Air Command (SAC). The base was closed at the request of the Moroccan government in 1963.

⁸⁴ “O, Say, Can You See!” Between Tripolitania in 1805 and North Korea in 1950, the flag was illustrated appearing over San Juan Hill in 1898, Fort Ehrenbreitstein on the Rhine in 1918, and Iwo Jima in 1945.

pirate town,” dismissing Tripolitan claims to injury; in 1898 the *Times* had similarly characterized the Spanish as dirty old villains who abused their children, and in 1953 the newspaper of record called the Koreans Communist puppets.⁸⁵ In each case, the United States supposedly went to war in order to defend the liberty of oppressed people: victims of pirates, abusive parents and communists. And in each case, occupations or military bases were necessary to protect nascent democracy. US forces stayed in Derna for seven weeks. They were in Santiago de Cuba for sixty years and have been in Korea for longer than that.⁸⁶

Half a world away from Korea on the Mediterranean coast of Africa, the United States had no intention of occupying Libya, but did want to remain influential with the new country’s government. In 1950, under the pretense of commemoration, the Marines arrived in Derna in three naval vessels. The official British description of this ceremony comes to us second-hand in a dispatch to the British Foreign Office from, E. A. V. de Candole, the British Resident in Benghazi, who regretted he had not arrived Cyrenaica in time to witness the ceremony himself.⁸⁷ Candole provided an account that made the battle seem more heroic and the occupation longer lived than they actually were; he claimed that in 1805 the Americans had captured Derna from pirates who used the city as a base, and that following an agreement with Ahmed the American occupation force remained in control for several years.

⁸⁵ "Not Evil, but Good," *The New York Times*, May 6, 1898. "Third Anniversary," *The New York Times*, June 25, 1953.

⁸⁶ One could also argue that by continuing to occupy the naval base at Guantanamo, the United States never surrendered its Cuban colony.

⁸⁷ De Candole, "Placing of Commemorative Plaque on Remains of American Fort at Derna, Cyrenaica to Mark Its Capture by American Marines in 1805."

As Erika Doss notes, memorials are “presentist in their aims and ambitions,” and in spite of missing the ceremony and being unclear about the details of the battle and occupation in 1805, Candole was very aware of the contemporary politics of the site of the commemoration.⁸⁸ Of the present state of affairs, Candole reported that the US Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Forrest Sherman, a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, enthusiastically received British advances to come to Cyrenaica to commemorate the capture of the city. Candole goes so far as to speculate that Sherman wanted a “shrine” in the Mediterranean for the Marines. In the context of Cold War militarization, in which Sherman and his contemporaries were deeply invested, shrines, memorials, and commemorations were all important technologies of memory used to recall the past, but also to shape the future.

The ceremony at Derna is one example of the forward-looking nature of memorialization. As Doss writes, “at the most basic level, memorials are designed to recognize and preserve memories. They are typically understood as acts and gifts that honor particular people and historical events.” Yet memorials also produce expectations for the future. “Memorials, like most things in capitalist and commercial economies, are informed by systems of production and reception, by expectations of change and reciprocity.”⁸⁹ In Derna, the British concession to the United States was meant to ensure continued Western influence in the region. Indeed, in December 1950, less than six months after the US show of force, Sayyid Muhammad Idris, Emir of Cyrenaica since

⁸⁸ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 206.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

1916 and a strong ally of the Western powers, was elected King of Libya by the National Constituent Assembly of Libya.⁹⁰ Thirteen months later, Cyrenaica joined with Tripolitania and Fezzan and declared themselves free from British and French colonial rule as the United Kingdom of Libya. As First points out, “Libya had political sovereignty but little else beside.”⁹¹ Libya, in spite of its independence, remained wed to the Western powers.

At Derna in Cyrenaica, the ceremony that helped to secure a Libya friendly to the United States depended on many layers of colonial and imperial power. Candole describes the setting as “a small, circular bastion on a convenient hill close to but separate from a square wall alleged to be a fort (due to become a reservoir) [that] was rapidly cleared of rubbish with the active assistance of the Acting Commandant of Police.” Once the site was prepared, the Marines, led by Cyrenaican police bag-pipe band playing Scottish reels, marched through the city and assembled at the hilltop site. Orray Taft, the US Consul in Tripoli, and Muhammad Sakizli, the Cyrenaican Prime Minister, gave speeches. Sakizli, who went on to become Prime Minister of Libya, expressed his desire that “so long as Great Britain and the United States together continued to take a close interest in the Mediterranean and to keep forces there, the peoples of its shores could hope to live in safety and peace.”⁹² Commemorating the fort, then, was a means of securing Libya in the future interests of the United States and Great Britain. But exactly

⁹⁰ “Cyrenica's Ruler Named Libyan King,” *The New York Times*, 4 December, 1950.

⁹¹ First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 16. In First’s analysis, she reveals that France “dragged her feet to the end” over Libyan independence, since French geologists had caught “a smell of oil in the Saharan air,” 69.

⁹² de Candole, “Placing of Commemorative Plaque on Remains of American Fort at Derna, Cyrenaica to Mark Its Capture by American Marines in 1805.”

what kind of “ancient American fort” stood at the site of this memorial ceremony, standing in now for the foundation of US power in the region?

While some commentators over the years have claimed a new, American fort was built above the city on the ruins of an older fort during the occupation, Eaton’s own account from 1805 contradicts these claims.⁹³ The fort that Candole alluded to (but not where the ceremony actually took place) was a battery of eight guns in Derna nearest the sea where the local governor lived.⁹⁴ In a letter to Commodore Barron, commander of the US naval squadron in the Mediterranean, Eaton described the capture of this battery that would ultimately be remembered as a fort:

Mr. O’Bannon, accompanied by Mr. Mann of Annapolis, urged forward with his marines, Greeks, and such of the cannoniers as were not necessary to the management of the field piece; passed through a shower of musketry from the walls of the houses; took possession of the battery; planted the American flag upon its ramparts, and turned its guns upon the enemy; who, being now driven from their out posts, fired only from their houses, from which they were soon dislodged by the whole fire of the vessels.⁹⁵

Following the capture of the city, Eaton wrote that “I have fixed my post in the battery; raised parapets and mounted guns toward the country to be prepared against all events; though I have no serious apprehension of a counter revolution.”⁹⁶ The “American fort,” then, was the headquarters of the US occupation force in Libya, long before the Italians arrived in 1911. And it was from this American fort that Eaton and the Marines withdrew

⁹³ For example, Rodd, *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea*, 238. Also, Menaugh, “Stars and Stripes to Victory in North Africa.”

⁹⁴ Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*, 337.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

just two months after they arrived—not two years, as Candole claimed—leaving behind the mercenary force they had recruited to help them affect regime change. Along with the town’s population, these mercenaries were subject to the foul shift in winds that follows failed occupations.⁹⁷

Even before the United States appeared in British-administered Cyrenaica in 1950 to commemorate its invasion and occupation of Libya 150 years earlier, the British preserved the memory of the American fort in the geographic archive of imperialism. UK Hydrographic admiralty charts, nautical charts for sea navigation, labeled a field of ruins above Derna as the ruins of an American fort well into the twentieth century.⁹⁸ In many ways, both the placing of a commemorative plaque at Derna in 1950 and the presence of the American fort on admiralty charts were old technologies, having more in common with the poems and anthems of the past than with the technologies of memory available to cultural producers in the 1950s. Admiralty charts reached a narrow audience, to be sure. And because it took part half a world away and out of sight of most Americans, the influence of the commemorative ceremony at Derna on attitudes in the US during the Cold War was likely negligible. Yet while I agree with historians like Zingg, who says that in the 1950s North Africa was “shrouded in exotic to most Americans,” I do not agree that Americans “only knew of the area as the place either where the United States launched its first offensive of World War II or which served as the setting for a

⁹⁷ In fact, in a letter to Commodore Rodgers, Eaton describe the mercenaries’ realization that Ahmed and his US backers had departed, and their subsequent panic and flight into the desert. Ibid., 363-364.

⁹⁸ Rodd, *General William Eaton; the Failure of an Idea*, 238.

Humphrey Bogart film.”⁹⁹ As I have shown in previous sections, the War with Tripoli and the Barbary Coast were well documented in popular as well as provincial texts.

Across multiple archives and periods, however, the visual archive of the battle was somewhat limited; while scenes from the larger war had appeared in the form of etchings, maps, paintings, and ephemeral performances executed in the one-hundred and fifty years that followed the end of the war, the visual record of the events at Derna were limited to maps and drawings of Eaton. An image of Eaton accompanied Prentiss’ collection of Eaton’s letters in 1813, and in 1936, a drawing of Eaton and two maps of the Barbary Coast accompanied the description of the War with Tripoli in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune*. In 1950, *The News York Times* illustration of famous US battles allocated two square inches to an image of Marines rising a US flag over the ruins of Derna in 1805. By the 1950s, it was critical that these images of Derna be updated in order to convey meaning in a country dominated by film and television. Cold War cultural producers quickly fashioned a new visual archive of the war that drew on the already existing textual universe of the encounter at Derna, which was synonymous with both the Orient and the Barbary Coast. And in 1950, the same year in which the Marines were marching in Derna and Korea, Hollywood produced its first cinematic account of the War with Tripoli.

Produced by Paramount Pictures for the big screen in 1950, the film *Tripoli* abandoned many of the elements that typically accompanied retellings of the war, including piracy, the long naval blockade, captivity, and the role of William Eaton.

⁹⁹ Zingg, "The Cold War in North Africa: American Foreign Policy and Postwar Muslim Nationalism, 1945-1962," 40.

Instead, the film is a lesson in Cold War gender roles set in the anachronistic world of the Barbary Coast. Rather than making the claim, as many sources do, that Derna was the turning point of the war, *Tripoli* insists that Derna *was* the war. The film's ahistorical script recalls the 1802 play *The Tripolitan Prize, or, American Tars on an English Shore* and was a sharp departure from typical accounts of the war which were fascinated with historical realism. In the film, the Navy appears to serve only as support for land operations, which glosses over the core issue in the conflict—control of sea routes. Instead, the film is organized around a competition for control of a woman's body. Rather than commerce or captives, then, *Tripoli* portrays gender and sex as the most important properties of the Tripolitan War.

Tripoli begins with credits rolling over a map of the Mediterranean. Audience members who were not already familiar with the Barbary Coast might at least recognize its proximity to Sicily and the Italian boot, familiar because only eight years earlier the United States had invaded both in the war against Italy and Germany. To this geography, the film's title sequence adds a brief historical context:

The United States was at war. The Tripoli pirates had challenged our right to the freedom of the seas, attacking our merchantmen and demanding tribute for safe passage. Our answer was to send warships to blockade the enemy's capital port of Tripoli, bottling up the pirate fleet. The USS *Essex* was in its sixth month of such duty when suddenly came a promise of action.¹⁰⁰

The war is about rights, piracy, freedom, and warships; but in the story that the films tells, most of the action takes place between a man and a woman.

The film stars John Payne as Marine Lieutenant O'Bannon, who commanded the small contingent of US Marines that accompanied Eaton across the desert, and Maureen

¹⁰⁰ Will Price, *Tripoli*, (United States: Paramount Pictures, November 9, 1950).

O'Hara as a French exile, the Countess D'Arneau, a fictional character with no basis in reality. Payne and O'Hara had played antagonistic love interests four years earlier in the widely-acclaimed *Miracle on 34th Street*.¹⁰¹ In *Tripoli*, Payne, who had a long career playing masculine leads, and O'Hara, who had a reputation as a strong female character, remained similarly antagonistic throughout much of the film. A year earlier, O'Hara played a Bedouin princess in *Bagdad*, and many of her future roles would be playing opposite John Wayne on the frontier landscape of the American west. As Cynthia Enloe points out, "[t]he militarization which sustained Cold War relationships between people for forty years required armed forces with huge appetites for recruits; it also depended on ideas about manliness and womanliness that touched people who never went through basic training."¹⁰² The characters that Payne and O'Hara embodied in *Tripoli* and other films played a vital role in the gendering of US Cold War culture.¹⁰³ Released just five months after the start of the Korean War, at a moment when the United States was no longer the only atomic power in the world, and in the shadow of the McCarran Internal Security Act, which established the legal framework for registration and persecution of communists and subversives in the United States, *Tripoli* harnessed the Battle of Derna to do significant cultural work.

¹⁰¹ *Tripoli* also resembled *To the Shores of Tripoli*, a film that used contemporary Marine Corps bootcamp as a backdrop for a romance between Paine and O'Hara. That film had to be reshoot to take into account the events at Pearl Harbor in December 1941. H. Bruce Humberstone, *To the Shores of Tripoli* (United States: 20th Century Fox, March 11, 1942).

¹⁰² Cynthia H. Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 5.

¹⁰³ O'Hara observed later in life that films like *Bagdad* and *Tripoli* were "tits and sand" films. Maureen O'Hara and John Nicoletti, *Tis Herself: A Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 130.

With O'Bannon and D'Arneau as the central characters, there is little room in *Tripoli* for Eaton. He appears briefly in the beginning of the film to describe the plan to unseat Yusuf and install Ahmed in Tripoli, but his most important role in the film is to validate the sexual purity of O'Hara's character. As the Americans dine with Ahmed in Egypt before departing for Derna, O'Bannon is surprised to see a white woman appear in the room. Following dinner, Eaton informs O'Bannon that the woman is a member of the displaced French bourgeois, "chased out of France after the revolution." D'Arneau is simply out of place in North Africa—a French refugee who depends on the kindness of another royal figure, rather than a member of Ahmed's harem. After sharing this vital information about D'Arneau's with O'Bannon, Eaton departs on a ship and does not reappear until the end of the film. Shortly after the party departs Egypt for Derna, the filmmakers further clarify D'Arneau's sexual purity in a scene with Ahmed, who expresses his desire for her; Ahmed has not yet had her, and it is clear that he is willing to go to any lengths to do so. The dichotomy of vital masculinity, embodied by Payne, and sexual purity, embodied by O'Hara, which often constitutes the West's image of itself, is set against the racial and gender uncertainty of the Orient, embodied by Phillip Reed playing Ahmed Qaramanli. All the characters are present and the colonial stage has been set. Throughout the remainder of the film O'Bannon and Qaramanli compete for D'Arneau's affection as they march across the desert.

In *Tripoli*, the desert wasteland between Alexandria and Derna becomes a backdrop for rehearsing racial difference at the opening of the Cold War. In *Tripoli*, racial difference is figured through the lens of desire. The film distinguishes between

each man's ability to subordinate his desires to the demands of war and the necessity of controlling the circulation of women's bodies. While Ahmed is unable to control his desire for D'Arneau and thus offers little resistance to her demand to accompany the expedition across the desert, O'Bannon does everything he can to keep the Countess from accompanying the war party, but fails because she conspires with Ahmed to deceive him. The film, then, suggests a certain logic: Ahmed (the Arab) fails to understand why the Frenchwoman belongs at home—because she is white (and the French, embattled in Algeria and their colonial empire, must withdraw); O'Bannon recognizes that North Africa is no place for women—white women, at least—and that war is a homosocial space meant for men (in this case, naturally, American men who will not suffer the same humiliations as the French as they take their rightful place as masters of the North Africa). The parallels of this cinematic logic to the very real colonial reordering taking place in North Africa in 1950 is striking.

The film recognizes that the colonial contest is not just a struggle between men. In spite of O'Bannon's resistance to the presence of a white woman in a war party, D'Arneau succeeds in accompanying the expedition; she has a strong enough resolve and enough influence over him to hold Ahmed close—she clearly desires to continue to remain close to power. Throughout the film, D'Arneau acts out this desire to retain her connection to wealth and opulence, the sins that forced her to flee from Revolutionary France to the Orient. The film, therefore, acknowledges Western women's agency and influence—or at least their demands. At this early moment in the story, however, D'Arneau's racial conscience remains undeveloped. She suffers for her early

misrecognition; though she succeeds in refusing to embrace the preeminence of racial over economic bonds—she accompanies the expedition against O'Bannon's demands—she is nevertheless forced to submit to the gendered logic that she travel along with the Arab women, who are responsible for meeting the men's domestic needs; D'Arneau chooses to remain close to her Arab benefactor, but it is not the luxurious life of the elite harem that awaits her, but a gender-segregated space of labor.¹⁰⁴ D'Arneau's embrace of O'Bannon at the end of the film owes at least as much to this element—the humiliation of domestic labor she suffers—as it does to Ahmed's betrayal of O'Bannon and the Americans when the mercenary army arrives at Derna. It takes a march across the desert for the Countess to recognize that if she truly desires a privileged space in the world, it must be outside the war zone, in the racialized space of the domestic in the West, where the commitment to militarization, nevertheless, is totalizing. D'Arneau subordinates her economic desires to her racial obligations the moment she resolves to warn O'Bannon of Ahmed's betrayal of the Americans to the defenders of Derna, saving O'Bannon from almost certain death. D'Arneau's embrace of the racial and gender logic of US militarism preserves her sexual purity, as well, for she finds that unlike the Ahmed, the Oriental prince, O'Bannon, the white hero, will not take her against her will.

Tripoli ends with O'Bannon and D'Arneau embracing one another on the collapsed ruins surrounding the tower on which the US flag has been raised, the US militarized body intertwined with the daughter of pre-revolutionary France, suggesting a

¹⁰⁴ The film portrays Arab women's lives unproblematically. For a more thoughtful meditation on gender, Islam, and patriarchy in the Maghreb, see Robinson, "Crossing the Strait from Morocco to the United States: The Transnational Gendering of the Atlantic World before 1830".

particular kind of securitized world view in which the power of the state is constituted by an alliance between the social elite and the military.¹⁰⁵ Ahmed is no longer a factor in this new world. He simply disappears from the film because he is guilty of failing to recognize the preeminence of race over gender in the colonial contest, mistaking wealth for power and assuming the Countess will stay loyal to him because of his riches. Ahmed erred when he trusted D'Arneau with his plans to betray O'Bannon and the Americans because he underestimates the bonds of whiteness; he fails to see that D'Arneau has *no choice* but to betray him because she must retain her racial dignity at all costs, even if it means the loss of her class privilege.

In the context of the Red Scare, the hierarchies of the film appeared essential to national survival. What this nationalist rhetoric overlooks is that United States only captured Derna because it successfully exploited the labor of a mercenary army composed mostly of Arab Muslims. The film conveniently overlooks this fact. But this fact has been overlooked by nearly every commentator since Eaton's account of the journey across the desert was published in 1813.¹⁰⁶

While most historians and cultural producers throughout the twentieth century situated the Battle of Derna as one act of a discrete episode—the War with Tripoli—in

¹⁰⁵ In the context of the Cold War struggle between France and the United States for preeminence in North Africa, the film's ending also imagines France yielding to US demands.

¹⁰⁶ In addition to the film's commentary on the proper ordering of gender, sex, race, and class, other fragments of the securitized worldview of the Cold War appear in *Tripoli*. Among the supporting cast is Howard Da Silva, playing Captain Demetrios, a character probably meant to represent Luco Ulovix, who commanded the Greek mercenaries that accompanied the US across the desert. As in nearly every account of the US expedition, the Greeks are portrayed as loyal to Eaton because they are Christians, as opposed to the Muslim mercenaries who accompany the expedition and are consistently described as traitorous and undisciplined. The irony of this casting decision was that Da Silva was named as a communist sympathizer and blacklisted four months before *Tripoli* was released in 1950 *Red Channels; the Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*, (New York: American Business Consultants, 1950), 43-44.

the history of the early republic, at least one agency recognized that the war was part of a larger history of naval operations in the early republic. In 1953, the United States Navy acknowledged the relationship between the War with Tripoli and the 1798-1800 Quasi-War with France by creating *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli, 1798-1805*, a 26-minute educational film produced by Creative Arts Studio, Inc.¹⁰⁷ *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli* placed the two wars within the larger context of militarization in the early republic. Decidedly low tech, the film featured animated storyboards with overlapping dialogue from two narrators. The first narrator maintains the authoritative tone of an elder historian, while the second speaks in a more colloquial tone and restricts his role in the dialogue to questions and moral appraisals about the people and events that are described to him. The film begins with the second narrator asking about the importance of conflicts that are “mighty far away and long ago.” The importance of these conflicts, the first narrator responds, is that they “were the proving grounds for the great fleets to come.” The film goes on to focus on US naval operations in the Caribbean and then the Mediterranean, leaving only a few minutes at the end to describe the attack on Derna. But it is the attack on Derna, closing with the US flag flying over the city, that appears to end the war.

The film parallels the history of the early republic with the development of its navy; it seems that the United States came into being through the miracle of militarization. The film boils the challenges faced by the early republic down to a weak central government, leading to a shortage of tax dollars, without which the United States

¹⁰⁷ *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli 1798-1805*, (United States Navy, 1953).

cannot adequately defend its commerce. This lack of revenue and defenselessness leads to unemployment and Revolutionary War veterans losing their homes and farms. Many respond by moving west or, worse, engaging in rebellion. The solution to all these national tragedies was a strong federal government with the ability to raise tax dollars and construct a naval fleet. In short, *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli* argues that it is the federal military that holds the republic together. While the Quasi-War with France was an important component of this development, the film emphasizes that the conflict with the French was but a preface to the more important test of American character during the War with Tripoli. As soon as the treaty with the French is signed, the film's music shifts and Thomas Jefferson steps forward to challenge the "Barbary corsairs." By the time Eaton arrives on the scene, the standard elements of the naval war have been rehearsed. Eaton, however, appears as a gray-haired old man, and it falls to O'Bannon and the Marines to lead the—once again howling—Arab mercenaries into the city. The battle ends with O'Bannon standing over the city receiving the adorations of a crowd with the US flag flying in the background.

The educational film ends with a montage of the war's most memorable moments, while the second narrator wonders, "well, did the war teach us anything?" The first narrator answers, "yes, commerce needs naval protection." But beyond merely economic benefits, the war also produces less tangible results: the United States "humbled the proud rulers of Barbary and gained prestige in the eyes of the world." In the context of the Cold War, the War with Tripoli mattered to the producers of the film because "America made it known at home and abroad that to keep a peace and to keep honor,

there must be ships that can fight and men who can lead.” In its willingness to situate the War with Tripoli within a wider historical context, the Navy documentary comes closer to providing a more full account of the war than Paramount’s film.

Yet *The Naval Wars with France and Tripoli*, like its Hollywood counterpart, misleads. The war did not end because of great American men empowered by US naval power. As Følayan showed, the war came to a conclusion because the United States was never able to gain the upper hand. The naval blockade proved rather ineffectual, and the US was in no position to widen the scope of the conflict. Jefferson, by empowering Lear to come to terms, drew back from Eaton and others’ pursuit of empire in North Africa. In addition, Tripoli actively resisted the United States. As Følayan concluded, Tripoli was not simply a den of pirates, but a legitimate government deeply involved in the wider Mediterranean economy and skilled at negotiating the political terrain of the day. Without support from neighboring states, its livestock trade with the British in Malta during the Napoleonic Wars, and the strengths of the its navy, Tripoli might have been in a much more precarious position.¹⁰⁸ But Tripoli had all these things going for it. If the United States succeeded at Derna at 1805 it was not because the United States was welcomed as a liberating force, but because once the flag went up over the fort, the US “turned its guns upon the enemy,” the defenders and inhabitants of the city, in order to force them into submission. Joined by a renewed bombardment from the US Navy, Eaton and his

¹⁰⁸ Følayan, "Tripoli and the War with the U.S.A., 1801-5," 261-270.

mercenary army took possession of the entire town within a few hours.¹⁰⁹ But what comes next in cultural and historical memory?

In *Tripoli*, Commodore Barron turns to Eaton on the deck of the USS *President* and exclaims: “Something to tell our grandchildren about, General. The first time over foreign soil.”¹¹⁰ Here, the filmmakers sanction their representation of the past by attributing its production to the demands of great men; those who helped to win the war desired that future generations should know of the labor that they performed under the flag of the United States. However, not everyone’s labor is as important in retellings of the story, as evidenced by the disappearance of mercenary labor. Following the elevation of the US flag, the Arab, North African and other mercenaries who performed the bulk of the labor in the battle are forgotten. The names of their dead go unrecorded and they are positioned as outside of the national project by virtue of their religion. In the Hollywood version of the Battle of Derna, the Marines ride into the city unopposed and accompanied by the Greek mercenaries. The camera pans to O’Bannon and D’Arneau as they consummate their union with a passionate kiss. As soon as the Countess acknowledges his authority by freely embracing him, O’Bannon declares the city secure. But what does all this flag waving and Franco-American coupling mean for Derna? And what does it mean to declare a city secure? In the film, these questions go unanswered, but there are clues what comes next. US Marines are shown disarming the city’s defenders at gunpoint. It is unclear if the population of the city will be put into chains and sold into

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*, 339.

¹¹⁰ Neither Baron nor *President* were present at the battle. And Eaton, of course, was in Derna.

slavery as a way to pay for the costs of the war, or if these prisoners and casualties of war will be allowed to remain and serve their occupiers.¹¹¹ Once US forces consolidated control of the town, what followed was occupation. But neither the documentary nor the other sources I examine here are concerned with the realities of occupation. There are no civilian casualties, no torture, no social unrest, food shortages, or reprisal killings. In the exceptionalist narrative of the battle and its aftermath, there are no further difficulties beyond having to defend and then evacuate the city following the peace treaty. The questions of what comes next would regularly go unanswered after multiple US interventions across the Cold War.

The heroic narrative of Derna, which overshadowed the very real consequences of its ongoing production for people in North Africa, continued to appear at regular intervals across the Cold War. In 1956, it was no less than C.S. Forester who authored a children's book about the war.¹¹² And in 1958, *The Titusville Herald* compared the recent arrival of US Marines in Beirut, Lebanon, "to protect American lives and property," to the arrival of the US Marines in Derna in 1805.¹¹³ As the Cold War carried on and the United States increased the frequency of its extra-legal schemes to manipulate affairs in places deemed strategically important to US interests, Eaton's reputation continued to hold steady. He was frequently described as the American Lawrence of Arabia and his

¹¹¹ There are multiple precedents for the enslavement of subjugated people in US history. According to Robert Allison, seven captured Tripolitans had been displayed in the United States in 1805, and Eaton's Treaty with Ahmed contained a secret clause that Yusuf, his family and chief admiral would be handed over to the US at the conclusion of hostilities. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*, 33. Eaton and Qaramanli, *Convention between the United States of America and His Highness Hamet Caramanly, Bashaw of Tripoli, God Is Infinite, February 23, 1805*.

¹¹² C. S. Forester, *The Barbary Pirates* (New York: Random House, 1953).

¹¹³ "Marines in the Middle East," *The Titusville Herald*, July 25, 1958.

assault on Derna situated as the precursor to clandestine interventions around the globe.¹¹⁴ Samuel Edwards, for example, set America's Lawrence in deep contrast to the "band of rogues" who accompanied him across the Libyan desert; to the North African nomads that Eaton encountered, he was "Eaton Pasha, the protected of Allah."¹¹⁵ Edwards claimed that during his march across the desert, Eaton formed "a new, special unit" to respond to the guerilla attacks that he encountered. This unit, with Eaton as its head—no doubt a Vietnam-era fantasy recalling the Green Berets—put an end to guerilla warfare by capturing eleven men and five teenage boys, who were all "put to the sword."¹¹⁶ Edwards also claimed that Eaton executed two of his mercenaries for insurrection, shooting one in the head and the other in the chest.¹¹⁷ Writing in *Marine Corps Gazette* in 1976, Trudy J. Sundberg repeated Edwards' claim, but said Eaton beheaded both mercenaries.¹¹⁸ In 1994, in *Valiant Virginian* with John K. Gott, Sundberg revised himself, claiming, as Edwards had, that the mercenaries were, indeed, both shot.¹¹⁹ Edwards and Sundberg's brutal descriptions of North African life certainly share something in common with Cornelius Felton's claim in *Life of William Eaton* (1838) that

[t]he reader will be struck by the manly tone of his official correspondence in relation to the Barbary powers, and the true policy to be adopted towards that nest of pirates. He will also feel humiliated that his country, in common with the rest

¹¹⁴ Samuel Edwards, *Barbary General. The Life of William H. Eaton* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 234. Jay Scriba, "His Name Made Barbary Pirates Tremble," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 28 February, 1968. Glen D. Adkins, "America's Lawrence of Arabia: William Eaton" (Dissertation, New Mexico Highlands University, 1969).

¹¹⁵ Edwards, *Barbary General. The Life of William H. Eaton*, 188.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 189-190.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹¹⁸ Trudy J. Sundberg, "O'Bannon and Company," *Marine Corps Gazette*, July, 1976. No reputable sources appear to repeat the claim.

¹¹⁹ Trudy J. Sundberg and John K. Gott, *Valiant Virginian: Story of Presley Neville O'Bannon, 1776-1850, First Lieutenant U.S. Marine Corps, 1801-1807* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 2007).

of Christendom, submitted so long to the exactions of barbarous hordes, equally contemptible in character, strength, and resources.¹²⁰

This backward projected violence against North African Muslims—recalling the language Samuel Barron used in 1805—reflects the shift in US policy towards Libya later in the Cold War.

The United States maintained its fiction of benevolence towards Libya for some time, however. As First points out, Libya was an ideal location for basing long-range bombers and reconnaissance aircraft.¹²¹ Wheelus Air Force Base near Tripoli was briefly an important forwarding-operating site for nuclear bombers—First says the United States had already spent \$100 million developing Wheelus, its first African air base, before the war even ended—and the United States signed a long-term lease with the Libyan government under King Idris in 1954.¹²² But the Libyan political landscape changed drastically after the discovery of oil in 1959. The wealth disparities that followed—as well as Israel’s occupation of Sinai at the conclusion of the Six Days War in 1967—fueled the rise of Muammar Gaddafi and Arab nationalism in a 1969 coup d’état leading to a steady decline in US-Libyan relations.¹²³ When the lease expired in 1970, the United States withdrew from Libya. In 1986, the United States mobilized the threat of terrorism, rather than piracy, as a pretense for bombing Tripoli; in a twist of fate, the United States bombed its former air field during the raid. All this long before the War with Tripoli was recast as the United States’ first war on terror beginning in 2001.

¹²⁰ Felton, *Life of William Eaton*.

¹²¹ First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 61.

¹²² Ibid., 62.

¹²³ Ibid., 18.

Islamic Terror

In 1993, at the end of the Cold War, Michael Kitzen asserted that in 1801 the United States went to war against Islamic pirates who were terrorizing Christian Europe, ignoring the much more complicated history of the Mediterranean world. According to Kitzen, the War with Tripoli culminated in the “superhuman feat” of attacking and capturing Derna. Kitzen also claimed that Islam enabled piracy, helping to maintain the foundations necessary for the ongoing maintenance of the US-Israeli relationship and overt hostility towards Iran, both of which were vital to US policy in the region.¹²⁴ A few years later, Kitzen went further, arguing that “Eaton’s words of outrage and disgust reflected the feelings of many of his contemporaries and later generations regarding American policy of acquiescence in the demands of pirate governments of North Africa.” By laying the blame for the Tripolitan war at the foot of John Adams, whom Kitzen claims never understood the binary of Barbary relations—tribute or violence—Kitzen concludes that Jefferson inherited a mess and had no choice but to go to war.¹²⁵ But as we know, this is not true; Jefferson could have met the demands of the 1796 treaty. But Jefferson also chose to pull back, rather than commit to supporting a total overthrow of the Tripolitan government.

At this point, it should come as no surprise that during the War on Terror, the War with Tripoli and the Battle of Derna were once more pressed into service, both in historiographical and popular realms. The figure of Islamic threat—piratical or

¹²⁴ Kitzen, *Tripoli and the United States at War: A History of American Relations with the Barbary States, 1785-1805*, ix, 1.

¹²⁵ ———, “Money Bags or Cannon Balls: The Origins of the Tripolitan War, 1795-1801,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 4 (1996).

terroristic—was deeply embedded in national consciousness, and historical and other accounts following 9/11 worked to draw a strong connection between the pirate, US public enemy number one in 1801, and the terrorist, public enemy number one since the end of the Cold War. As had been the case with the pirate, the terrorist was presented as a figure outside the bounds of law and as a natural target for US violence.¹²⁶

The assumption of a fundamental connection between pirates and terrorists was evident in many historical accounts.¹²⁷ For example, a work of journalistic non-fiction like Joseph Wheelan's *Jefferson's War: America's First War on Terror 1801-1805* (2005) could assert that the War with Tripoli "was not so different from today's war on terror" because both were responses to crimes "prosecuted cynically in the name of Islamic 'jihadism.'"¹²⁸ The War on Terror already had a model script, according to Wheelan: "fought for strong principles by an idealistic new republic, the Barbary War was an audacious action for a constitutional government scarcely twelve years old and twenty years removed from its war of independence. The war in North Africa marked the first time that U.S. troops planted the Stars and Stripes on a hostile foreign shore."¹²⁹ In Wheelan's account of the past, war produces heroes.

¹²⁶ On the long history of the figure of the Muslim enemy, see Deepa Kumar, *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2012).

¹²⁷ Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). Wheelan, *Jefferson's War: America's First War on Terror, 1801-1805*. Lambert, *The Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World*. Joshua E. London, *Victory in Tripoli: How America's War with the Barbary Pirates Established the U.S. Navy and Built a Nation* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Pub., 2005). Zacks, *The Pirate Coast: Thomas Jefferson, the First Marines, and the Secret Mission of 1805*. Smethurst, *Tripoli: The United States' First War on Terror*.

¹²⁸ Wheelan, *Jefferson's War: America's First War on Terror, 1801-1805*, xxiii. In *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an*. Denise Spellberg shows that jihad was indeed invoked by Tripoli, but not in the very limited sense of war and totalitarianism that Wheelan and many others claim. Denise A Spellberg, *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 146-148, 301.

¹²⁹ Wheelan, *Jefferson's War: America's First War on Terror, 1801-1805*, xxiv.

But heroes are not what war produces. War produces corpses, injured bodies, and psychic injury. Yet two years after 9/11 and in the midst of another failed occupation—Iraq this time—Wheelan’s text sold well and his book was followed by others making similar claims.¹³⁰ By 2010, during a period of increasing “piracy” off the Horn of Africa, the War with Tripoli was used as an example of how to deal with pirates, bringing the mobilization of the war for imperialistic purposes full circle.¹³¹

On the cultural front, the heroic Christian manhood narrative of the War with Tripoli made its way into novels like William H. White Jr.’s *The Greater the Honor: A Novel of the Barbary Wars*. White’s novel is a typical homosocial romance that focuses on the life of seamen during the naval blockade of Tripoli. But in his notes at the end of the novel, White found room to gesture to the Battle of Derna and to the Oriental despotism that often serves as the US other. White contended that after Eaton departed, Yusuf killed the remaining inhabitants of the city as punishment for their disloyalty.¹³² But there is simply no evidence that this atrocity happened. An even more imaginative take on the war than White’s was Brad Thor’s *The Last Patriot*, which harnessed the Battle at Derna in a uniquely offensive way. In the novel, Thor describes a hidden document cache in which Muhammad admits he was not divinely inspired when he wrote the Koran. The content of these encrypted documents are lost (or hidden) until 1805,

¹³⁰ Lambert, *The Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World*. and London, *Victory in Tripoli: How America's War with the Barbary Pirates Established the U.S. Navy and Built a Nation*. were further additions to this genre.

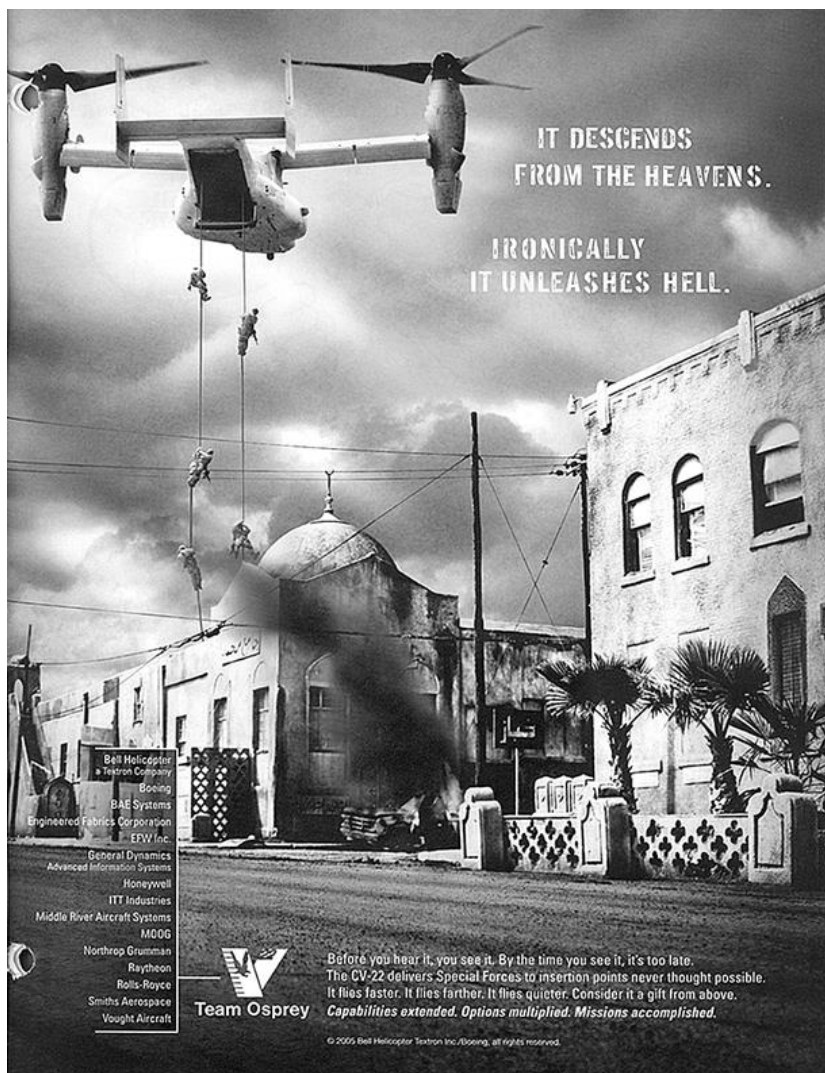
¹³¹ Martin N. Murphy, *Somalia: The New Barbary? Piracy and Islam in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010). During the War on Terror, the Libyan security services cooperated with the United States, and the country the United States occupied twice and lost twice became an outpost for US torture and extraordinary rendition.

¹³² William H. White, *The Greater the Honor: A Novel of the Barbary Wars* (Easton, MD: Tiller Publishing, 2003), 284.

when Thomas Jefferson sends a company of Marines to Derna to retrieve a mechanical device for decoding Muhammad's secret confession. It is the United States, no less, that uncovers the truth that Islam is a false religion, premised on the writings of Muhammad, not Allah. Like Payne and O'Hara in *Tripoli*, the protagonist and his love interest in *The Last Patriot* are masturbatory white supremacist figures—beautiful physically but also ideologically. Thor's book is offensive not because it challenges dogma or presents a counter-reading of historical evidence, but because it reimagines history in a deeply destructive way. The widespread desire to destroy Islam—a religion that Thor attributes to Muhammad, rather than Allah—also extended to the imagined landscape of advertising.¹³³

In September 2005, the typical Oriental city, imagined repeatedly as Derna throughout US history by John Whittier Greenleaf and others, made a prominent appearance in a promotional advertisement for Boeing and Bell Helicopters' V-22 Osprey published in *Armed Forces Journal* and the *Air Force Magazine*. The ad showed the hybrid airplane/helicopter hovering above a smoldering mosque while several soldiers repelled down a rope to the ground below. Bold capital letters announced "It descends from the heavens. Ironically it unleashes hell." Beyond simply invoking the Islamic city as a natural site for the penetration of US violence, as so many cultural producers had before, the authors of the Boeing advertisement imagined that the future military demands of the nation would in fact be organized around, or rather against, Islam. Once

¹³³ Brad Thor, *The Last Patriot* (New York: Atria Books, 2008).



more, Derna and the figure of the Islamic threat was used to fuel the construction of an impressive military arsenal that could be deployed around the globe.

Although the ad had run early in September in *Armed Forces Journal* and the *Air Force Magazine*, it was not until it appeared once again on September

Illustration 2: Team Osprey, from *Armed Forces Journal* 24 in *National Journal* that it caught the attention of activists. No one seemed to know who was responsible for the publication of the advertisement. Robert Dudney, Editor in Chief of *Air Force Magazine* blamed a bad photocopy for his overlooking that the building in the image was, in fact, a mosque.¹³⁴ Boeing blamed Bell; Bell blamed a mid-

¹³⁴ Wendy Tanaka, "Osprey Ad with Mosque Is Pulled an Islamic Advocacy Group Received Apologies from Boeing, Bell Helicopter and a Magazine That Printed the Ad," *The Inquirer*,

level executive; TM Advertising blamed Bell; Bell blamed the *National Journal*. Presumably, the firm who designed the ad was cognizant enough to label the mosque in Arabic—"Mosque Muhammad"—so how could they miss the offensive nature of the ad? The ad blatantly sexualizes violence—"delivers Special Forces to insertion point never thought possible"—and draws on the language of a clash of religions and civilizations—"consider it a gift from above." Bell apologized, but with an odd twist: Mike Cox, a Bell vice president, explained that the image was sampled from a selection of stock photographs. "We didn't actually hover an Osprey over a mosque." Indeed, there was a logic to the ad—Bell "asked the TM ad agency [of Dallas, Texas] to come up with an ad depicting the Osprey inserting soldiers into a restrictive, difficult-to-access area."¹³⁵ The Islamic world, of course, was as far away from Texas and as hard to reach as TM Advertising could imagine. Meanwhile, Mai Abdul Rahman pointed out the very real implications for Muslims beyond the threat of US invasion: "Both Boeing and Bell Helicopter have extensive interests in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and plan to market the Osprey to Arab and Muslim governments for civil and military use."¹³⁶ Thanks to companies like Boeing and Bell, military technology was available to any government who could afford it.

http://articles.philly.com/2005-10-01/business/25443263_1_bell-helicopter-american-islamic-relations-tm-advertising.

¹³⁵ Hal Bernton, "Magazine Ad 'Unleashes' Hell for Boeing and Bell," The Seattle Times, http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2002532657_boeingad1m.html.

¹³⁶ Mai Abdul Rahman, "Bell, Boeing and Tm Advertising Blame Others for Their Tasteless Ad," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* December (2005).

Conclusion: Real Americans at War

Perhaps the greatest irony of War with Tripoli is that between 1796 and 1801—the treaty years, Tripoli only captured one US ship, and its crew was quickly ransomed.¹³⁷ Besides the crew of the *Philadelphia*, who were waging war against Tripoli, no other Americans were taken captive. The menace of Barbary piracy that has been invoked so often throughout US history to justify militarism, violence, invasion, and occupation is a myth. Nevertheless, there was a war. And at Derna in 1805, the United States raised its flag over a North African city. This battle has been embodied historically by William Eaton, whose labor on behalf of the United States overshadows everyone else's; and if not Eaton, it has been O'Bannon who most embodies US exceptionalism and military supremacy. Given that he organized and commanded the attack on Derna, it might be useful to ponder what Eaton might have said about the contemporary absence of the War with Tripoli from the Smithsonian's exhibit and of Muslim mercenaries from the historiographical narrative of the Battle of Derna. Perhaps Eaton would echo his August 9, 1805 letter to the Secretary of the Navy, written while he was still in the Mediterranean:

When peace was finally resolved upon, what were the provisions made for the brave men who had fought our battles in the enemy's country, and who had contributed in rendering *this moment propitious to such an event?* –Supplies, indeed are sent out for the *Christians* under my command; but the alternative left me to perish with the *Mahometans* under my command or desert them to their solitary fate and abandon my post like a coward! This is the first instance I ever heard of a religious test being required to entitle a soldier to his rations; and the

¹³⁷ Fölayan, *Tripoli During the Reign of Yūsuf Pāshā Qaramānlī*, 35.

only one of an ally being devoted to destruction with so little necessity and with so much cold blood.¹³⁸

Although he faced many issues during the mercenary army's march across the desert, it appears that in the end Eaton recognized the labor of all the soldiers who served under his command. But Muslims fighting for the United States at Derna are everywhere ignored. Meanwhile—with the exception of the Smithsonian—Eaton and the Marines have been well remembered. The absence of the War with Tripoli from the Smithsonian's "The Price of Freedom: Americans at War" exhibit is odd given the long history of remembering the war, but does little to diminish the war's significance: first, it helped to secure US shipping in the Mediterranean, and later it worked as an important historiographical device for sustaining an exceptionalist narrative of US empire.

What the United States described as piracy—North African claims of territorial sovereignty in the Mediterranean—continued until 1815, when the so-called Western powers established naval hegemony in the western Mediterranean. In the next chapter, I dig deeper into the archives in order to explore the life of an American who worked as a mercenary in the Ottoman world for both Egypt and the United States, helping to lay the foundations for the first treaty between the Ottoman Porte in Istanbul and the US government in Washington, DC. Outside of a few sweeping accounts, however, this mercenary encounter with the Ottoman world in the 1820s is forgotten. Nevertheless, the discourses of personal and national sovereignty that it produced linger.

¹³⁸ Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*, 384.

2. SOVEREIGN EQUALITY AMONG MEN AND NATIONS: GEORGE BETHUNE ENGLISH IN THE OTTOMAN WORLD, 1815- 1828

Istanbul was Constantinople
Now it's Istanbul, not Constantinople
Been a long time gone, old Constantinople
Still it's Turkish delight on a moonlit night
Jimmy Kennedy , 1953¹

In Chapter One, I demonstrated that the War with Tripoli and the Battle of Derna have been invoked in historical and cultural memory throughout US history as a precedent and justification for the exercise of US power, while simultaneously outlining the racial and gender logic of US exceptionalism at different moments in US history. Representations of the US-led invasion of an Ottoman Regency in 1805 were particularly important in times of war, as the Barbary Coast mercenary encounter was remembered as a formative moment in the development of US national identity. The Barbary Coast, however, was not the only anachronistic, Orientalized space circulating in popular culture in the 1950s. Four-hundred years after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans, Irish lyricist Jimmy Kennedy's song "Istanbul, not Constantinople" assured its Western audience that in spite of its name change, the city remained a space of sensual delight. Kennedy's song, written shortly after Turkey joined NATO, achieved wide-spread popularity and is evidence of the longing for anachronistic spaces that is so central to Orientalism and colonial representations.² Yet, while Istanbul was embraced in popular culture and by military

¹ Jimmy Kennedy, *Istanbul (Not Constantinople)* (1953).

² The Four Lads' recording of the song reached #10 on the US Billboard and spent thirteen weeks on the charts. Since then, the song has remained popular and has been covered or referenced countless times. Turkey and Greece both joined NATO in 1952.

planners, little attention was given to history of Turkish-American relations and the nineteenth-century mercenary encounter between the United States and the Ottoman Empire that helped to lay the foundations for these relations.³ For the United States, the stakes of this encounter were no less than the recognition of US sovereignty by the major powers in the Atlantic world. Ottoman recognition, in the form of equal commercial footing with Britain, France, and Russia in Ottoman ports, as well as free passage through the Dardanelles Straits, was highly desirable for the commercial and ruling class who dominated the foreign policy of the young republic.⁴ The stakes of the US encounter with the Ottoman Empire were also high for George Bethune English, a religious dissident from the United States who worked as a mercenary in the Ottoman world. An outcast at home, the Mediterranean became a stage on which English sought recognition, laboring to prove himself a patriotic American. Between 1815 and 1828, English was a key player in US foreign policy in the region, although he has rarely been recognized as such.

In the twentieth century, scholars vacillated between describing English as a secret agent and a mercenary—one a legitimate, if often unrecognized agent of the state;

³ Focused on the Manichean, forward-looking logic of the Cold War, many writers focused on the history of the new Turks, not the old Ottomans. In these cases, the biography of Atatürk functioned for historians in many of the same ways that Mehmed Ali functions: as the embodiment and father of the modern nation state. Eleanor Bisbee, *The New Turks; Pioneers of the Republic, 1920-1950* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951). As one reviewer of Bisbee's book pointed out, what was important was that the Turks "had discarded the fez and the veil." Mary Ellen Ayres, "Timely Book Describes Growth of 'New' Turkey," *The Washington Post*, 1951 May 27, 1951. In 1985, historian Melvyn P. Leffler could even complain that Turkey had been left out of studies of the Cold War. Melvyn P. Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and Nato, 1945-1952," *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 4 (1985). The same holds true for English. Similarly, there are no historiographical references to English between 1938 and 1962 that I find. In 1938, Pierre Crabitès only cites two sources and reports very little beyond that (23-28). In 1962, Alan Moorehead describes English's reporting of the invasion of Sudan and his encounter with Waddington. (205-210).

⁴ While the end of the War with Algeria in 1815 secured free transit through the Straits of Gibraltar and across the Mediterranean for US commercial traffic, there remained barriers to US trade in the eastern Mediterranean. Equal standing between nations or states is an important aspect of the principle of sovereign equality and a core component of international law.

the other the anti-thesis of the state as the sovereign authority over violence and nationalism. In his 1928 Princeton dissertation, *American relations with Turkey to 1831*, Walter Livingstone Wright, Jr. called English a “renegade” and the “ideal secret agent.”⁵ “Renegade” is a common appellation hurled against religious skeptics in general and converts to Islam in particular. English does not appear to have actually converted to Islam, and describing him as a renegade works historically to marginalize his body of labor. Nor is it entirely accurate to describe English as a secret agent; his first trip to Istanbul as an agent to negotiate relations between the United States and the Ottoman Empire was widely reported at the time in spite of efforts to keep the mission a secret.⁶ Pierre Crabitès, an American who served on the Egyptian Mixed Courts from 1911-1936, described English a soldier of fortune and mercenary in his 1938 account of Americans in the Egyptian army.⁷ In their preface to *The Papers of Henry Clay* (1952), Mary Hopkins and James Hargreaves followed Wright’s model and described English as a “secret agent.”⁸ In *Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East* (1967), David Finnie returns to calling English a secret agent while labeling the Bostonian a representative of what he calls “a sort of early-American awkward squad.”⁹ By 1983, English was remembered as a “prominent American Turkophile,” a description that is somewhat problematic linguistically due to English’s own admission that he did not read

⁵ Walter Livingstone Wright, Jr., “American Relations with Turkey to 1831” (Dissertation, Princeton University, 1928), 94-95. Wright says Adams had been grooming English for some time, but provides no evidence of this grooming.

⁶ For example, see, *Boston Commercial Gazette*, February 9, 1824.

⁷ Pierre Crabitès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army* (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1938).

⁸ Mary W. M. Hargreaves and James F. Hopkins, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Volume 1, the Rising Statesman, 1897-1814* (The University Press of Kentucky, 1959), 827.

⁹ David H. Finnie, *Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 53, 271.

Turkish.¹⁰ In 2007, Israeli historian Michael Oren called English a “young contrarian”—a fair characterization, perhaps, but then goes on to conclude that he was a “warrior-diplomat (in the cut of George W. Bush)”—a comparison that defies understanding.¹¹ Whatever he was, or remains in the archive, English was instrumental in further establishing US sovereignty in the early years of the republic.

In this Chapter, I argue that English’s biography offers significant insights into the ways in which sovereignty and mercenarism are closely linked, in spite of the careful efforts of the state to minimize and forget the mercenary labor performed on its behalf. English helped to circulate information about and influence US relations with the Ottoman world from 1815 to 1828 and was present at many of the initial contacts that set the stage for the first commercial treaty between Istanbul and Washington in 1830. This treaty recognized the United States as an equal of Europe in the Ottoman Mediterranean. Sovereignty, regarded as a valuable property of nations, also functions of the level of the individual. For English, the Atlantic and Ottoman worlds were sites of personal sovereignty, and in the homosocial space of these overlapping territories he was free to practice a peculiar kind of secular manhood and republican nationalism. English’s religious skepticism, the very thing that got him in trouble in Boston, made him a useful instrument in the Mediterranean. More than simply an adventurer or soldier of fortune, English had significant connections in government and contributed to important strains of knowledge production about Africa and the Middle East in the early republic.

¹⁰ Harold E. Bergquist, “Henry Middleton as Political Reporter: The United States, the Near East, and Eastern Europe, 1821–1829,” *Historian* 45, no. 3 (1983), 361.

¹¹ Michael B. Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007), 102, 583.

Between 1815 and 1825, English traveled from the United States to the Ottoman Mediterranean at least three times. During his first visit, English resigned his position as a US Marine in order to participate in the Egyptian invasion of the Sudan in 1820. He published an account of his trip up the Nile in 1822 in London and then returned to the United States. He traveled back to Turkey twice at the request of Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams. Within the contours of rising anti-Islamic and pro-Greek sentiments, which complicated foreign policy and trade in the Mediterranean, English undertook state-sanctioned missions—quieter, though not entirely secretive—in an attempt to secure access to Ottoman ports and equal commercial footing for the United States. Ultimately, these missions led to their desired ends for the United States. For English, the results were less satisfactory. The government abandoned English shortly before he was scheduled to return to the Mediterranean a fourth time, and he died shortly before his fortieth birthday in 1828.¹²

This chapter examines the archival remains of George Bethune English: the books and letters he wrote, as well as books and letters in which he was recognized and remembered by people he met including travelers, missionaries, and diplomats. I begin with a brief biography of English's life leading up to and including his publication of *The Grounds of Christianity Examined* (1813), which led to his ostracism from New England society and departure for the Mediterranean. I place English within the context of Egyptian history in the first two decades of the nineteenth century in order to establish the setting for his *Narrative of an Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar* (1822, London;

¹² Samuel Lorenzo Knapp, "Biographical Sketch," *Emerald and Baltimore Literary Gazette* 1, no. 26 (1828).

1823, Boston). I then trace English's career as he returns to the Ottoman Empire twice at the direction of the Secretary of State and President. Finally, I examine the ways in which English was described in the years following his death, and the ways in which these descriptions—as well as English's own writings—negotiate the tension between personal and national sovereignty.

Unlike William Eaton, George Bethune English is a marginal cultural figure and has not been well or widely remembered. Yet his archival remains are worth examining because they demonstrate the different ways in which “the East” could be written into existence by Americans, as well as the ways in which early Americans constructed, understood, and illustrated the borders between the Christian and non-Christian world, as well as the divide between the Levant and Africa. Finally, English matters because in spite of his disagreements with powerful Christian theologians, he remained an unapologetic American exceptionalist even after he rejected Christianity, embracing Judaism and, perhaps, Islam. English is one piece of a larger record of US intimacy with the Ottoman world in the nineteenth century, and because of his flirtations with the East he played an important role in attempts to advance US economic and political interests in the Ottoman world.

“A Solitary Man”

English was born in Boston in 1787 to Thomas English and Penelope Bethune. His family appears to have been well regarded, but of middling class at best.¹³ He graduated

¹³ J. L. Weisse, *Recods, Genealogical Charts, and Traditions of the Families of Bethune and Faneuil* (New York: Henry Ludwig, 1866), 8. Penelope's grandfather was a banker who had immigrated from Scotland. A

Harvard in 1807, where his talent for poetry gained him admission to the Hasty Pudding Club.¹⁴ He subsequently pursued and rejected the practice of law, though he never reflected in writing on this career.¹⁵ It was at this point in his life, after graduating from Harvard, that a military career first appealed to him. In 1808, he sent a letter to Senator John Quincy Adams, who had probably been his teacher at Harvard, to apologize for asking for a reference of the Senator without first notifying him. English had supplied Adam's name to the Secretary of the War, "to corroborate my application to the Government of my Country for a military appointment." English—only twenty-one years old at the time—hoped that Adams' recommendation would help "to introduce me to that profession which is not only the object of my most ardent predilection, but is also sanctioned by parental assent."¹⁶ The appointment never went through—military expenditures declined during Thomas Jefferson's presidency and following the end of the War with Tripoli. Instead, English returned to Harvard, where he took an interest in Judaism. In 1812, he won the Bowdoin Prize for his thesis titled "The Origin of Masoretic Points, and their subservience to a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew

short obituary published when Penelope passed away in 1819 identifies her as the daughter of George Bethune, Esq., who was a loyalist merchant. *The Loyalists of Massachusetts*, 1907, pg. 125. Thomas and Penelope were married February 11, 1874. *Documents of the City of Boston*, Volume 4, Issues 101-160, pg. 411. Thomas appears to have been the captain of a boat owned by George Bethune. No records suggest he ever attained much wealth, and in a letter to John Adams, English mentions needing to care for his father in his old age. George Bethune English, *Boston, George Bethune English to James Lloyd, December 22, 1822*, Adams Papers (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society).

¹⁴ Henry Lee Shattuck, Barrett Wendell, Jr., and William Bond Wheelwright, eds., *Twelfth Catalogue of the Officers and Members of the Hasty Pudding Club* (Jamaica, NY: The Marion Press, 1902), 12.

¹⁵ Knapp, "Biographical Sketch."

¹⁶ English, *Boston, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, April 7, 1808*. Adams was Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory from 1806 to 1809.

Language.”¹⁷ He briefly approbated as a minister but was unsuccessful and dissatisfied.¹⁸ Shortly thereafter, he renounced Christianity and in 1813 he published *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*, an act that would forever change his life.

The Grounds of Christianity Examined is a comparative analyses of the Old and New Testaments that begins with a strongly worded statement about the importance of free public discussion and the singular character of the United States. In English’s estimation what made the United States so exceptional was not racial superiority or manliness, but rather its secular character: “perfect freedom of opinion, and of speech are here *established by law*, and are the *birthright* of every citizen thereof [emphasis in original].”¹⁹ But beyond simply an exercise of his natural—and national—right to dissent, English wrote to defend the Jews, asserting that “the Christian system is built upon the prostrate necks of the whole Hebrew nation.”²⁰ In fact, many of English’s arguments were drawn from the *Chuzzuk Emunah*, “The Strengthening of the Faith,” written in Lithuanian in 1593 by Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham of Troki, a member of an obscure Jewish sect, the Karaites. While he worked as a librarian at Harvard, English apparently discovered a Latin copy of the *Chuzzuk Emunah* transcribed in Germany in 1681.²¹ English’s assimilation of the book’s arguments led him away from Christianity and towards Judaism.

¹⁷ *A List of Winners of Academic Distinctions in Harvard College*, (Cambridge: Harvard College, 1907), 21.

¹⁸ Knapp, "Biographical Sketch."

¹⁹ George Bethune English, *The Grounds of Christianity Examined by Comparing the New Testament with the Old* (Boston: Printer for the Author, 1813), ix.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, xviii.

²¹ Richard H. Popkin, *Disputing Christianity: The 400-Year-Old Debate over Rabbi Isaac Ben Abraham of Troki's Classical Argument*, ed. Peter K.J. Park, Knox Peden, and Jeremy D. Popkin (Amherst, NY:

While *The Grounds of Christianity Examined* barely registers on most historians' radar, philosopher Richard Popkin observes that at the height of the Second Great Awakening, the book's publication produced a "major controversy among New England Protestants."²² In Boston, the book was important enough, or perhaps dangerous enough, to merit a response from three significant figures in Unitarian theology at an important moment in the city's theological evolution, which began with the Puritan's Halfway Covenant in 1662 and continued with the rise of Unitarian theology at Harvard in 1804. Ironically enough, the Puritans paved the way for English's infidelity by embracing congregational administration, rather than a centralized theological body, opening the gates for the rise of Unitarian theology in many Boston churches and a general liberalization of the New England social order at the same time that a mercantile elite was developing.²³ Unitarians remained followers of Jesus Christ, whom they considered to be the Messiah, but they rejected the idea that he was the son of God. But while Unitarians rejected the Trinity and the theological dogma of the virgin birth, they were unwilling to tolerate English's public rejection of the New Testament as divinely-inspired and his accusation that Jesus Christ was essentially an imposter. Equally offensive to many Unitarian theologians was English's defense of Judaism—because he never rejected the authority of the Old Testament and its laws and prophecy, English was not simply criticizing Christianity, but also defending the moral authority of the Jews. As one minister at the time put it, "some answer to Mr. English's book was thought by many

Humanity Books, 2007), 12-16. Like English's book, the *Chuzzuk Emunah* itself contained repackaged arguments.

²² Ibid., 7.

²³ Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century*, Studies in Entrepreneurial History (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1955).

friends of Christianity to be indispensable, before the public attention to that work had subsided.”²⁴

The first response to English’s book came on October 24, 1813, when William Ellery Channing—a 1798 graduate of Harvard, “the father of Unitarianism,” and the Senior Minister at Federal Street Church in Boston—preached two sermons on infidelity, which were directed at English and subsequently published for circulation.²⁵ In his sermons, Channing never mentions English by name, but outlines the ways in which vice, pride, and ignorance lead to infidelity, presumably an insult of English’s character.²⁶ In a sermon that drew strongly on the tradition of the Puritan Jeremiad, Channing attributed the rise of infidels to decadent society: “they are seeds sown in every soil, and seeds which are peculiarly quickened by a prosperous and luxurious state of society.”²⁷ But beyond simply blaming social decadence for English’s infidelity, Channing offered a deeper spiritual—which is to say, individual—explanation:

In some persons, there seems to be an unfavourable constitution of intellect, a singular want of judgment, an undue ascendancy of imagination, in consequence of which religious truth can never be fixed and settled in their minds. For these and other reasons, I am unwilling to believe, that infidelity has no source but

²⁴ Samuel Cary, *Review of a Book Entitled "the Grounds of Christianity Examined, by Comparing the New Testament with the Old, by George Bethune English, A.M."* (Boston: Isaiah Thomas, 1813), 3.

²⁵ William Ellery Channing, *Two Sermons on Infidelity Delivered October 24, 1813* (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1813). This book is in the John Adams Library at Boston. In a written response, English acknowledged that he knew the sermon had been directed at him. An article in *The General Repository and Review* supports this assumption. George Bethune English, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Cary* (Boston: For the Author, 1813). "Article 9," *The General Repository and Review* 4, no. 2 (1813). 1813 also marks the publication of Anonymous, *The Life of the Late Gen. William Eaton; Several Years an Officer in the United States Army, Consul at the Regency of Tunis on the Coast of Barbary, and Commander of the Christian and Other Forces That Marched from Egypt through the Desert of Barca, in 1805, and Conquered the City of Derne, Which Led to the Treaty of Peace between the United States and the Regency of Tripoli*.

²⁶ Channing, *Two Sermons on Infidelity Delivered October 24, 1813*, 8-13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

depravity of heart, and that it can never be traced to causes which may absolve it from guilt.²⁸

Channing's criticism oriented English as an individual who did not simply fall outside the established Christian order of the United States, but who purposefully and maliciously flaunted its freedoms. Subsequent criticisms from two other Boston theologians would amplify Channing's attack and drive English out of Massachusetts.

Channing's strongly worded criticism of English was echoed in a book-length review of *The Grounds of Christianity Examined* by the Reverend Samuel Cary. In November, Cary—who graduated Harvard in 1804 before becoming a preacher at King's Chapel in Boston until his early death in 1815—published *A Review of English's Grounds Of Christianity Examined*.²⁹ Cary identified spiritual failings and assaulted English's character, just as Channing had done.³⁰ But Cary went further with his personal attacks and accused English of being an instrument of the Jews; anti-Semitism and Christian Zionism thread together his response to English.³¹ Cary argued that English should have listened to the advice of his friends and not published his book: “he would have avoided, what he must now be prepared to encounter, the just indignation of that part of the community, whose most sacred feelings and principles he has thus shamefully insulted.”³² Cary hinted that English published his book not out of a desire to seek the

²⁸ Ibid., 13.

²⁹ Cary, *Review of a Book Entitled "the Grounds of Christianity Examined, by Comparing the New Testament with the Old, by George Bethune English, A.M."*. Also in the John Adams library.

³⁰ Ibid., 32.

³¹ Ibid., 33.

³² Ibid., 35.

truth, but as a reaction to his own failures, like a child acting out.³³ Therefore, whatever future misfortunes English suffered as a result of his book were deserved.

English's forfeiture of personal sovereignty—his exclusion from avenues of work and independence in the United States—mirrored Cary's take on Jewish territorial sovereignty. Cary's vision for the future of the Jews is at the core Christian Zionist thought: "the most stiffnecked and incorrigible race of men that ever came from the hands of the Creator, are to be made sensible of their errors and repent of their hostility to the Christian religion, and in consequence are to be gathered from all nations under heaven to the country of their ancestors."³⁴ Cary's Christian Zionist narrative of the Jewish restoration is above all a story of displacement: "they are scattered among all people from the one end of the earth even to the other, and among these nations they have found no ease."³⁵ Remedying the Jew's perceived lack of territoriality sovereignty was a central thrust of Cary's review of English, and indeed a core component of both the Unitarian and national vision for the future. Cary predicted a future in which "the Christian religion will prevail over the whole earth; and the state of society will be meliorated, and the human character formed and improved by its principles." This society depended on the establishment of a Jewish national state: "the Jews, when the cup of their deserved afflictions is full, and the period of their exile is completed, will be re-established in their ancient country under a prince of the lineage and perhaps the name of David." Once the restoration of the Jews is complete and the world is "brought under the

³³ Ibid., 128-129.

³⁴ Ibid., 67.

³⁵ Ibid., 99.

influence of Christianity and Jerusalem is made the principal seat of this universal religion, then the prophecies relating to the triumphant state of the Messiah on earth will be accomplished.”³⁶ English’s rejection of Christianity and embrace of Judaism threatened the possibility of the messianic future Cary and others desired.

Jews, though, were not simply abstract figures in the early republic. Cary closed by offering half-hearted warning that Jews in the United States and elsewhere should not be further injured: “a Christian who endeavours to degrade them, or to drive them from what they consider their strong hold by force, by terror, by calumny, by any other method than fair argument, has none of the spirit of his Master, and deserves not to bear his name.” In fact, Cary claimed to have the pleasure to know and respect some Jews, “who would do honour to any country and to the most improved state of society.” Finally, he offered an apology to his Jewish friends—“for the harsh things which I have been compelled, in justice as I think, to say of their nation.”³⁷ Yet Cary offered no such caveats about English.

English subsequently published letters responding to both men’s criticisms. His response to Channing is short. He excuses himself for presuming the sermons were directed at him and spends several pages begging pardon for any perceived slights of Channing.³⁸ But while he begged the pardon of Channing, he took exception to Cary’s criticism, asking “why am I stabbed in the back from the Pulpit?”³⁹ English accuses Cary

³⁶ Ibid., 123.

³⁷ Ibid., 134-135.

³⁸ George Bethune English, *A Letter Respectfully Addressed to the Reverend Mr. Channing Relative to His Two Sermons on Infidelity* (Printed for the Author, 1813), 6-7. ———, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Cary*.

³⁹ ———, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Cary*, 9.

of being the one guilty of shoddy scholarship: “it is perfectly clear to me, from this mistake, and from several others in your Review, that, notwithstanding the solemn complacency with which you pronounce your ludicrous decisions upon the merit of the works of that man, that you have never read them, and know nothing about them.”⁴⁰

English blamed these oversights on the speed with which Cary had composed his reply to *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*: “Yes, sir, you must certainly have written and printed your book in four weeks.”⁴¹ English might have been on firm ground—in his copy of Cary’s letter, Thomas Jefferson noted some of Cary’s circular reasoning.⁴² Still, the criticisms appear to have had real, material consequences for English. In the closing pages of his response to Cary, the last thing he would publish before disappearing from the scene for eight years, English recognized the difficulties that lay ahead of him:

Mr. Cary you are easy in the world, and have many friends, and live respected. My situation is much the reverse, and I shall probably have to see much trouble in making my way through this world of fraud and falsehood. Yet so help me God ! I would not change places with you; I could not have my cheeks crimsoned with the suffusion which now burns yours, for millions. You have insulted me, sir, with shameful and rancorous epithets, and malignant abuse, because I have acted as I ought in ceasing to affirm in the name of God what I believed was false; and you go on asserting in the name of the God of truth, things which you cannot prove; and relying upon your influence, your standing in society, and your imagined learning, and talents, have undertaken to crush a solitary man, who has been so unfortunate as to have been imposed upon, and still more unfortunate in finding it out. You have even had the brutality to represent me, p. 36, as hung ‘upon a gibbet, to be gazed at with shuddering curiosity, to be pitied and avoided.’⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid., 29-30.

⁴¹ Ibid., 103.

⁴² In June of 1814, Israel Kursheedt, a prominent Jewish American, sent Thomas Jefferson a copy of English’s book, as well as a copy of Cary’s review and English’s response. He told Jefferson that stationers had refused to sell the book “from a fear to offend” and that “a few copies” had been procured to “dispose of only to the liberal and enlightend [sic]. Israel B. Kursheedt to Thomas Jefferson, June 24, 1814.

⁴³ ———, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Cary*, 117-118.

English was clearly wounded by the Unitarian ministers, both emotionally and economically.

The debate between English and the Unitarian ministers drew outside attention as well. On October 1, 1813, *The General Repository and Review*—a short-lived Boston quarterly edited by Andrews Norton—published a synopsis of the debate surrounding *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*, which had “the bad distinction of being the first original works of this character, ever published in New England.” The writer launched a series of ad hominem attacks against English: “Mr. English is one of the unfortunate class of men, who are continually subjecting themselves to ridicule, by the mistake of supposing, that what is new to them, is new to the whole world.” The article goes on to compares English to Quixote, “shrewdly suspecting windmills to be giants.” The writer concludes that in spite of his “remarkable deficiencies...we are not willing to give up the hope of Mr. English’s return to usefulness, and should be sorry to do anything to prevent it.” Nevertheless, the writer concluded, for the moment English had succeeded in “destroying his own reputation, blasting his own prospects, putting an end to his usefulness, cutting himself off from society of the wise and good.” The writer cites both Channing and Cary’s responses, but only mentioned Cary’s, saying that “the rational Christian will be gratified with the manliness with which the author [Cary] avows his opinions.” *The General Repository and Review* promised additional criticism to come: “as we have already mentioned, we expect a more complete answer to English’s book

than has yet appeared, from a gentleman, whom we are gratified to speak of as one of our number.”⁴⁴ The Boston Brahmins were not done with English yet.

The more complete answer to English was delivered in 1814, by Edward Everett, Minister of the Brattle Square Church in Boston. *A Defence of Christianity against the Work of George B. English* was dedicated to the Reverend John Thornton Kirkland, and it is the longest (at 520 pages) of the three responses to *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*.⁴⁵ Everett was familiar with fellow Unitarian ministers’ criticisms of English’s book and he drew extensively from the exchange between Cary and English and several times from Channing’s sermon and English’s response. Everett extends Cary’s accusation of plagiarism as well as echoing his appraisal of the condition of the Jews, although they occupy a much less-central object in his theological cosmology than Cary. Everett reasons that “the Jews have, therefore, hardly so much right to complain of being brought to prisons and the stake, as the hereticks and dissenters of all names and periods.”⁴⁶ On the whole, however, Everett confines himself to pedantic criticisms of English’s scholarly rigor. It would be nine years before English responded to Everett. Later in this chapter, I position English’s response to Everett, *Five Pebbles from the Brook*, as a final effort by

⁴⁴ "Article 9." Published before Cary’s response to English, the writer must have had advance access to Cary’s tract. The writer also appears prescient, writing “We have no doubt that he is sincere in one [faith], and was sincere in the other [infidelity]; and with his sort of mind, if he were to happen to get engaged in the history of Mahomet, we should be not at all surprised, if he were to suffer a new change, as extraordinary as any that have proceeded.”

⁴⁵ Edward Everett, *A Defence of Christianity against the Work of George B. English, A.M.* (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1814). Interestingly, Everett also won the Bowdoin Prize in 1812, alongside English. Everett wrote about “The Art of Printing.” *A List of Winners of Academic Distinctions in Harvard College*, 21.

⁴⁶ ———, *A Defence of Christianity against the Work of George B. English, A.M.*, 11.

English to struggle for personal sovereignty at home after he arrived back in Boston from the Mediterranean in 1823.⁴⁷

While individual ministers attacked him from the pulpit and in print, English also faced off against The Church of Christ as a whole. The church demanded an explanation and retraction from English in an initial interview, but he failed to reply to a follow-up letter sent to him on July 25, 1814. Subsequently, on November 3, a church committee voted to excommunicate him. Noting that he had refused to retract his statements about Christianity and that he had ignored further contact with its members, the committee concluded English “has publically and opprobriously assailed our holy religion” and “violated his own solemn covenant engagements, renounced his Christian profession, scandalized the Christian name, and proved himself to be, not merely an apostate from the Christian Church, but an enemy to the Christian religion.” The committee notes indicate that English had left his father’s in Brighton for Virginia, “not expecting soon to return.” The report concluded that English’s was an “unhappy and unprecedented case.”⁴⁸ Certainly this is true, for English was now labeled an apostate and enemy of Christianity, not small charges in 1814.

Because he challenged the liberal theology of Unitarianism that undergirded the Boston social order responsible for much of New England’s economic expansion, English found himself marginalized. Either willingly, or because the influence of his friends finally had some effect, he left Boston and published nothing else for almost ten years.

⁴⁷ George Bethune English, *Five Pebbles from the Brook: A Reply to "a Defence of Christianity"* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Author, 1824).

⁴⁸ Stephen Paschall Sharples, ed. *Records of the Church of Christ at Cambridge in New England, 1632-1830* (Boston: Eben Putnam, 1906), 393-394.

According to several sources English had some role in the Harmony Society's Colony—a utopian community—after the publication of his book and subsequent attacks by the Boston theological establishment. Perhaps, then, Harmony, Pennsylvania is the western site where some sources say he worked as a printer.⁴⁹ But for whatever reason, English gave up on utopia and the business of printing to return to another avenue that had not been closed off to him by Boston's theological elite: military service. There was a need; at the same time that The Church of Christ was debating English's membership and apostasy, the British were burning public buildings during their occupation of Washington. English must have still had at least some support in government because in 1815, he finally received a military appointment—just as he had asked for in 1808. The *Senate Executive Journal* records that President James Madison nominated English as a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps on February 2, 1815.⁵⁰ But on February 16, the Senate ratified the Treaty of Ghent, which had been negotiated in part by US Ambassador to Russia, John Quincy Adams, and by the time English was commissioned on March 1 and assigned to Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC, the war with Britain was over. ⁵¹ There was, however, still a need for sailors due to a brewing conflict with Algeria. During the war with Britain, US-Algerine relations had suffered, and Algeria had captured several US-flagged ships. Once the war with Britain ended, the United States undertook a naval expedition against Algeria. English's entry

⁴⁹ For example, Hargreaves and Hopkins, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Volume 1, the Rising Statesman, 1807-1814*, 827. Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 102.

⁵⁰ *Senate Executive Journal*, A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774 - 1875, Volume 2 (Library of Congress, 1815), 623.

⁵¹ *Naval Register*, Printed by Order of the Secretary of the Navy (Washington, DC: Weightman, 1815).

into military service was the “return to usefulness” that would transform his stubborn intellect into a tool of the state.

With the US Mediterranean Squadron and Ismael Pasha in Egypt

Shortly after being commissioned, English was assigned to the Mediterranean Squadron. Two squadrons were to be assembled for the assault on Algeria, one under Stephen Decatur in New York and the other under William Bainbridge in Boston. English was attached to William Bainbridge’s group at Boston, which failed to sail until July 1, by which time Decatur had already captured the Algerine flagship and signed a treaty with Algiers.⁵² Nevertheless, English remained in the Navy. Following the end of the war, the Mediterranean Squadron became a permanent feature of US militarism abroad, based at Port Majorca in Minorca, a Spanish-controlled island in the Mediterranean. Our appraisals of English’s life in the Mediterranean must remain conditional at this point, for he is largely absent from the archives between 1815 and 1820. But we can speculate some about his life as a mariner. One biographer who knew English claims the life of a sailor agreed with him, as it “placed him amongst gentlemen, which was gratifying to his taste—and, it is said he was a favorite among them.”⁵³ As for service in the Mediterranean Squadron after 1815, one US sailor likened it to membership in a yachting club, as the fleet cruised from port to port.⁵⁴ But service in the Mediterranean offered

⁵² “Independence,” Department of the Navy, <http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/i1/independence-ii.htm>. Hunter Miller, ed. *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818*, vol. 2 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931).

⁵³ Samuel Lorenzo Knapp, “George Bethune English,” *Rhode-Island American [New York Commercial Advertiser]* 1828, 1.

⁵⁴ Craig L. Symonds, *The Naval Institute Historical Atlas of the U.S. Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 64.

more than the company of other men and exotic ports of call to English; it also gave him the opportunity to explore the contemporary theological and political landscape of the Levant, which had fascinated him for many years. Historian Daniele Salvoldi claims that English first arrived in Egypt in April 1818, staying until June, and that he had been in Istanbul and İzmir before that. This timeline would seem to agree with English's own statement to John Quincy Adams in 1823 that he had been "at Constantinople six years ago."⁵⁵

There are other clues about English's service in the Mediterranean. On February 10, 1819, a curious report appeared in the *Christian Messenger*, a Middlebury, Vermont newspaper. An anonymous author claimed that English, a former minister and naval officer, had "embraced the Mahomedan faith at Constantinople."⁵⁶ Whether this is true or slander directed at English by his detractors is impossible to know. Francis Burnap, who had an office on Merchant's Row, published the paper. At the time, however, colonial newspapers often printed unaccredited material from other newspapers. The announcement of English's conversion might have been published in any number of other newspapers that have not been preserved in the archive. English might have even requested the announcement himself, either as an act of true faith or rebellion. What we do know for sure is that Edward Everett was also in Istanbul in 1819. Regardless of whether it was English, Everett, or someone else who was the source, the news item must have been inflammatory. While some of the founders might have imagined a space of

⁵⁵ Daniele Salvoldi, "American Presence in Egypt: 1775 to 1856," <http://earlyexplorersegypt.blogspot.com/2011/08/american-presence-in-egypt-1775-to-1856.html>. English, *Constantinople, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, November 23, 1823*.

⁵⁶ "George Bethune English; Gospel; Massachusetts; Mahomedan; Constantinople," *Christian Messenger*, February 10, 1819.

citizenship for Muslims in the republic, popular opinion of Islam remained low following the Wars with Tripoli and Algeria. As evidenced by the language of the three ministers who responded to English's *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*, Muslims fell just below Jews on the list of undesirable religious others in the United States. To "take the turban" was viewed in a very negative light, and the accusation that he had converted to Islam would haunt English even after death. In *The Blue Nile* (1962), for example, the Australian writer Alan Moorhead summed up English's life—and his flirtation with the Orient, concluding that when he arrived in Egypt "at once the East had swallowed him up."⁵⁷ Yet English's own archival remains, examined at length, complicate the simple story of the American who had "gone Turk."

SWALLOWED BY THE EAST

In 1820, English was certainly in Egypt, where the political landscape was vastly different than in 1805, when the United States was able to recruit a mercenary army in Alexandria to go to war with Tripoli. In the intervening years, Egypt's fortunes had shifted, and a series of social reforms had begun to reshape the Ottoman province. Mehmed Ali Pasha, an Albanian, arrived in Egypt in 1799 as part of a force sent by the Ottomans aboard British vessels to expel the French following Napoleon's 1798 invasion. After the expulsion of the French and the departure of the British, Mehmed Ali stayed behind, consolidating his power base and going on to establish a militarized, modernizing state. When William Eaton arrived in Alexandria in 1805, shortly before Mehmed Ali

⁵⁷ Alan Moorehead, *The Blue Nile*, Revised edition. (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1972), 205. *The Blue Nile* was the follow up to Moorehead's immensely popular *The White Nile* (1960). *The Blue Nile* was not as popular, perhaps because, as one reviewer noted, it featured "no heroes on the scale of Burton and Speke, Livingstone and Stanley." Dorothy Middleton, *The Geographical Journal* 139, no. 1 (1973).

was named Viceroy, he had little difficulty locating mercenaries to participate in the US invasion of Tripoli—Egypt had far more mercenaries than it needed in the aftermath of the Anglo-Ottoman push to expel the French. Six years later, the Viceroy relieved Egypt of its surplus of mercenary labor and solidified his position by executing many of the remaining Mamluks, soldier-slaves who ruled Egypt for over seven hundred years. At the same time that Mehmed Ali was consolidating his authority over Egypt, he was exercising power elsewhere in the Ottoman domain. Nominally a vassal of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed Ali, supported by his son Ibrahim, led the Ottoman invasion and reconquest of Arabia in 1814.⁵⁸ With its successful termination of the campaign to suppress the religious and political revolt in Arabia, Egypt had become a force to be reckoned with in the Ottoman Empire.

In 1820, Ali's forces invaded the Sudan.⁵⁹ According to Khaled Fahmy, rather than to simply claim sovereign power over new territory, the invasion was meant to accomplish multiple goals: first, Mehmed Ali hoped to locate and eliminate any remaining vestiges of the Mamluks who had fled up the Nile; second, he hoped to secure access to the resources of the interior, including slaves and soldiers; third, he hoped to purge disagreeable Albanian elements from his army.⁶⁰ The military expedition traveled

⁵⁸ This invasion culminated in the execution of Abdullah ibn Saud in Istanbul, an event that continues to influence events in the Middle East. In spite of the Ottoman (re)conquest of Arabia, Saudi Wahhabism proved durable and remains the dominant branch of Islam in Saudi Arabia. Madawi Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁵⁹ Henry Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt: A Study of Muhammad 'Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967 [1932]).

⁶⁰ Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army, and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002). Conscription of Sudanese soldiers was initially based on enslavement. It was not until 1822 that conscription of the fellahin, a movement linked closely to nationalism and land, began to take form.

up the Nile River, not an easy task since the river was only navigable to Wadi Halfa, at the beginning of the second cataract of the Nile. Beyond Wadi Halfa, river transport was impossible. The territorial gulf created by the Nile rapids and the desert was frequently bridged by trade caravans, but it had been little affected by Ottoman sovereign power.

The campaign to pacify the Sudan and extract its resources was accompanied by at least three Americans. George Bethune English was one of these three, employed as an advisor to Ismael Pasha based on the recommendation of the Henry Salt, British Consul in Egypt.⁶¹ English arrived at Wadi Halfa, for all practical purposes the edge of Ottoman Egypt, in October 1820. Five days after his arrival he suffered a bout of ophthalmia—a generalized inflammation of the eyes for which he took Laudanum, a strong narcotic—and immediately fell a week behind the primary expedition.⁶²

A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar (1822), English's opiate-fueled account of his trip up the Nile, one of the first descriptions of the Sudan by an American, begins with a brief biography of Mehmed Ali and the troubles on the Upper Nile. The problem, as English describes it, is decidedly premodern: Egypt suffers from brigandry, a form of piracy. The solution is sovereign power: Mehmed Ali will “subject these countries to his dominion.” This exercise of sovereign power—in effect modernization—required “the destruction or disarmament of the brigands, who have heretofore pillaged those countries,” giving way to order, tranquility, and security. Another decidedly modern effect of the expedition according to English is that it will

⁶¹ In a note in the first US edition of his book, English gives the names of the other two Americans as Khalil Aga and Achmed Aga.

⁶² English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 5.

open up the land to the geographer and eliminate the “uncertainty” and “obscurity” concerning the source of the Nile.⁶³

Far from home, English transformed the Egyptian landscape into a metaphor for his own troubles: “the Nile resembles the path of a good man in a wicked and worthless world.” And before Joseph Conrad ever described a trip up the Congo as “like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world,” English described the trip south into central Africa “as presenting an epitome of the moral history of man.” He praised the ancient Egyptian and Nubian civilizations and credited Ethiopia as the originator of sciences and institutions transferred to Egypt, then Greece and Rome, and finally Europe, lamenting that “the people who now occupy the territories of nations extinct or exterminated, have profited neither by their history nor their fate. What was once a land occupied by nations superstitious and sensual, is now inhabited by robbers and slaves.”⁶⁴ This inaugural account of the Sudan by an American, then, is one of degeneration due to war and violence.

English’s observations were pre-Hegelian, written before the “scramble for Africa,” and put to paper before the rise of what V. Y. Mudimbe calls “new historical form and the possibility of radically new types of discourses on African traditions and

⁶³ Ibid., vii-xi. *ibid.* See Deborah Manley and Peta Rée, *Henry Salt: Artist, Traveller, Diplomat, Egyptologist* (London: Libri, 2001). English’s narrative appears to have been entrusted to William John Bankes for publication. Bankes collected Egyptian antiquities and was exiled from England in 1841 with the support of the Duke of Wellington as he was facing execution for being accused of buggery.

⁶⁴ English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 60-63. Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*, 33.

cultures.”⁶⁵ English’s account of Africa was shaped by ideas about race, religion, and sex in which Africa and the Levant were more closely linked than they would be for writers just fifty years later.⁶⁶ Rather than an well-developed racial typology, English’s is an *a posteriori* formulation of race that depends less on skin color than other characteristics. The Ethiopians, who are Christian, are black, but not Negros. Along with dark skin, they have “the white man’s physiognomy and long hair.” But the residents of Sennar, to the west,—men who are “yellow, tall and well shaped” and women whom English says are the ugliest he has ever seen because they are engaged in so much drudgery—are “exceedingly avaricious, extortionate, faithless, filthy, and cruel.”⁶⁷ In 1820, English lacks the necessary *episteme*—what Foucault describes as an *a priori* apparatus—from which to draw on in order to produce the well-developed racial typologies of later mercenary encounters; it never occurs to him to make any comparisons to people of African descent in the United States. As Bruce Dain has argued, at this point in the development of ideas about race in the United States, “blacks could constitute a distinct people, persistently black but still human, capable of improvement and degradation, depending on circumstances.”⁶⁸ Race was still a historical, rather than a scientific or biologic, subject. The degenerative state of Sennar might be reversed.

⁶⁵ V. Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 1.

⁶⁶ Jonathan S. Adams and Thomas O. McShane, *The Myth of Wild Africa: Conversation without Illusion* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 11.

⁶⁷ English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 110, 142-143.

⁶⁸ Bruce Dain, *A Hideous Monster of the Mind: American Race Theory in the Early Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 41.

Though he lacks the well-developed racism of later arriving Americans in the Sudan, what English does have is some sense of Islamic practice, as well as an ugly streak of misogyny. Religion, first, figures significantly in the ways English describes the people of Sennar. In Berber, at the Great Bend of the Nile, English recoils from the spectacle of Muslims who eat pork, while betraying a fascination with their practices of religious body modification. “We saw here three men, of about twenty-five years of age, who had been circumcised but five days past, a thing I had never known before to have occurred to the children of Mussulmans.” In a footnote, he explains the absence of circumcision from the Koran and its association with “the ancient Arabs from time memorial, as descendants of Abraham.” For Muslims, he says, it is optional but “undoubtedly conducive to vigour and cleanliness.”⁶⁹ He notes the cross-denominational nature of this practice in the region, saying that Egyptian Coptic and Abyssinian Christians also practice circumcision, “because (say they) Jesus Christ was circumcised.”⁷⁰ Yet, while circumcision is a healthful practice for men, it is evidence of depravity in Muslim women. English observes, “many of the women among the Mahommedans cause themselves to be circumcised, from fanaticism, by cutting off the labiæ of the pudendum muliebre.” Women surface infrequently in English’s life, to be sure. But whenever they do, he seems to express little besides disgust.

In both Berber and Sennar, English is disappointed to witness prostitution, while commentary on slavery appears to be out of his reach. English complains that among the

⁶⁹ English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 18.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 18, 89.

Berbers owners of black slaves would permit soldiers of the occupation to have sex with them for one dollar. But it is the prostitution that troubles him, not the ownership of black Africans. As a guest in the house of a local ruling class family, English claims the mother offered to let him take one of the family's two daughters—young and attractive but already married—to bed with him. Without revealing his own orientation, English scolds the mother, telling her that for a Muslim adultery is a crime as serious as murder. Yet English's scolding does not appear to be that of a true believer. In a footnote he admits that if not for the effects of the sun he might have lost his virtue. Recognizing the irony of his position, English recounted an episode in which a soldier berated a local man for the country's female promiscuity and male drunkenness, which the soldier swore the invading army, as representatives of the Sultan in Istanbul, would soon correct; English pointed out that the soldier had just come from the other side of the river where he had gone to seek out female entertainment.⁷¹ English appears to believe that there is something about women's bodies that cause men to act irreligiously. Of the Berber, he complained further, "if their women are accustomed to grant their favours to their countrymen, as liberally and frequently as they did to our soldiers, I should imagine that it must be difficult, in this country, for a man to know his father."⁷² Women appear to be agents of disorder. English never thinks, though, to connect sexual servitude and the circulation of women's bodies in Berber with slavery in the United States, or even the Ottoman Empire as a whole.

⁷¹ Ibid., 89, 93-96. Ten years earlier, English had expressed similar sentiments about prostitution when he said that the only true offenses Christ committed were that he respected adulterous women and presented John the Baptist as Elias.

⁷² Ibid., 94.

When the Egyptians finally arrived at the capitol, there was no battle for the city. English lamented “finding this once powerful city of Sennaar [sic] to be almost nothing but heaps of ruins, containing in some of its quarters some few hundreds of habitable but almost deserted houses.” After eighteen years of decline during the rule of Badi VII, the leader who surrendered the city graciously to the invaders.⁷³ But this was not the Dark Continent or Wild Africa, laying entirely outside of human time. English describes the ruins of a great city, with marble monuments and an impressive palace. The city was still inhabited and there were three markets in which Turkish coffee and Greek food were available following the arrival of the Egyptians. The only hostility English observed was widespread Anti-Christian sentiment—probably owing to a long conflict with Abyssinia to the east—though most of the inhabitants had never seen a Christian according to English.⁷⁴ Sennar was to be plunged into modernity with the intensification of the slave trade as well as the extension on Egyptian imperial power southward.

English had little in the way of ideology to connect his misogyny more closely to race and slavery, but he seemed overwhelmed by what was taking place around him. As with most invasions, what followed was widespread social disorder and violent atrocities. After his early success in penetrating the region, Ismael waged a campaign of terror against the locals and was eventually murdered. It would take six years for Mehmed Ali to subdue resistance in the region.⁷⁵ English was in effect witnessing the events that led to

⁷³ Ibid., 125.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 125-132.

⁷⁵ Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt: A Study of Muhammad 'Ali*, 52. Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali: From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt*, 54. ———, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army, and the Making of Modern Egypt*, 86-8, 92.

the creation of the Sudan, including a stream of war refugees and forced resettlement.⁷⁶ English reported the return of Divan Effendi with 350 enslaved prisoners from east of Sennar. Among these were three chiefs, two of whom were impaled in the public square of the capital on the advice of the Sultan of Sennar. English recoiled from this brutality, as one dying man chanted the shahada until he was too weak to do anything but spit at the invaders while the other chief repeatedly called the Egyptians “robbers and murderers.” Here, again, is an instance in which men are described in flattering terms. Like the beautiful “well shaped” men that he describes elsewhere, these men stand out for their valor. Later, English observed Ali Cogia Achmet returning from an expedition ten-days southwest into the mountains with two thousand captured Bokki women and children who had been stripped of their gold. Disillusioned, English did not stay long before requesting to be sent back to Cairo due to his ophthalmia. On his return trip to Aswan, English crossed paths with Mehemmet Bey’s army, which was on its way to pacify Darfur and Kordofan in the western Sudan.⁷⁷

English was still in Egypt in 1821 when the Greek War of Independence began with the massacre of Muslims and Jews across the archipelago. These outbreaks of violence were shortly followed by Ottoman reprisals in Turkey and Greece. The rebellion in Greece shifted relations among the Ottomans, British, French, and Russians and may have been one of the events that propelled English home. In September 1821, English met the German missionary Joseph Wolff on a boat from Alexandria to Cairo. The two

⁷⁶ English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 55-56.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 135-7, 146-9, 155.

appear to have been acquainted only for a few months, but English is a frequent topic of Wolff's journals as one of the members of the circle of Europeans around Henry Salt. In an 1824 account of his missionary work in the Ottoman Empire, Wolff described his attempts to bring English back into the Christian fold, an endeavor at which he was unsuccessful. The two went their separate ways when Wolff left for Palestine in December.⁷⁸ Along with the Greek Civil War there may also have been a pay dispute with Mehmed Ali that compelled English to leave Egypt in 1822.⁷⁹

English's reentry to the United States was not immediate. In March, English departed Egypt for Malta, where he spent a month in the homosocial space of quarantine with, among others, the missionary Pliny Fisk. This encounter, one of the first between a US missionary and mercenary in the Ottoman world, is preserved in two letters Fisk wrote, one to his sister and the other to English before the two parted company in May—Fisk returned to Egypt and then died in Beirut a few years later, while English went to London and then the United States. Beginning with Walter Livingstone Wright in 1928, scholars have repeatedly quoted several passages from these letters. In the first letter, Fisk accused English of “obstinate hostility to the truth,” calling his case “one of the most deplorable and dangerous that I have ever known.”⁸⁰ Quoting this passage from the first

⁷⁸ Joseph Wolff, *Missionary Journal and Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Wolf, Missionary to the Jews*, ed. John Bayford (New York: E. Bliss & E White, 1824), 123, 176.

⁷⁹ Knapp, "George Bethune English." claims that the amount of the dispute was \$20,000. If this is true, it would make sense that English later aligned himself with Mehmed Husrev Pasha, who had been imprisoned at one point by Mehmed Ali.

⁸⁰ Pliny Fisk, *Malta, Pliny Fisk to George Bethune English, May, 1822*, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (West Haven, CT: Yale University). Wright, "American Relations with Turkey to 1831". Field, *From Gibraltar to the Middle East: America and the Mediterranean World, 1776-1882*, 94. Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 104. Many of these texts contain similar errors and omissions that call into question their authors' overall accuracy. Field

letter helps to position English as a renegade for those who would see him as such. In the second frequently-quoted letter, Fisk referred only to “men of the world...who are destitute of vital religion...who have no adequate idea of what it is, or of what it requires of its professors.”⁸¹ Scholars have read Fisk’s letter, which does not refer to English by name, as evidence that he believed English did not understand the importance of faith. Both these things may be true—English may have been a renegade and devoid of faith—but these two passages represent but a fragment of the two men’s intimate relationship. For example, in his first letter to English, Fisk expressed “unrestrained goodwill” towards English, but said “it has grieved me more than I know how to express to find you so fond of misrepresenting and distorting the doctrines of the gospel and [dragging] from them inferences and conclusions which evangelical men will unite in considering unfair and unjust if not monstrous and blasphemous.” It was not simply blasphemy that irritated Fisk, but the fact that English’s views caused him personal pain. Grieving from the loss of his missionary partner Levi Parsons in Alexandria, Fisk concluded his letter to English:

My dear Sir, I wish you may be happy. May you one day know what a broken heart is, and what the meekness of the gospel is. I wish and pray that you may die happy but O I should shudder at the thought of your dying as you are now. I shall often think of you and if my imperfect prayers may prevail you will, before the

incorrectly notes English’s date of induction into the military as 1817, when in fact it was 1815. Oren claims English left Egypt at the end of 1822, unlikely since the first edition of *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar* was published in 1822 in London and impossible since English was in Malta with Pliny Fisk in May. Ibid.. Hilton Obenzinger makes this error as well. Hilton Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant: Levi Parsons, Pliny Fisk and the Palestine Mission " *Religion & Literature* 35, no. No. 2/3 (2003). In Chapter 4, I explore some of Oren’s more fantastic claims in *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*.

⁸¹ Pliny Fisk, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M., Late Missionary to Palestine* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 203.

door of mercy is shut again to you, rejoin to bow before the cross and rest your hopes on the blood of Atonement.⁸²

English had once again flummoxed a Christian minister. In the colonial space of the Ottoman world, English was able to freely exercise his personal sovereignty in this manner. Back in the United States, the situation was much more complicated.

RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES

Before he returned to the United States, English traveled to London and arranged for the first edition of *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt* to be published anonymously. The book was dedicated “with affectionate respect,” to Henry Salt, Esquire, the British Consul General in Egypt, whom English called his “fatherly friend in a foreign land.” Salt, who recommended English to the Egyptians, was Consul-General in Alexandria from 1815 to 1827 and responsible for collecting Egyptian antiquities and cultivating a relationship with the Ethiopians. At some point after he arrived in Egypt, English must have become acquainted with Salt. The nature of their relationship remains obscure, but his relationship with Salt was apparently helpful in helping him secure the book contract. Though he published the first edition of his book anonymously, English was not unknown in London. In fact, he had been described in a recently published book by George Waddington. Waddington met English as he and the Reverend Barnard Hanbury were traveling up the Nile. The two men met English at Merowe, where they were turned

⁸² ———, *Malta, Pliny Fisk to George Bethune English, May, 1822*, 4.

back by Ismael.⁸³ In his account of their meeting, published in London in 1822, Waddington described English as a man with the “the grave and calm look of the Turks” who had “took the turban.” If this had been all Waddington had to say, English might not have objected. After all, English would later emphasize his ability to pass for a Muslim as he was seeking a job with the US government. What English objected to was Waddington’s claim that he complained about the reception he received from the two men. Waddington wrote, “it is difficult to say what reception a renegade has a right to expect from those whose religion he has deserted.”⁸⁴ After his arrival in London, English wrote to Waddington, to dispute this characterization of their meeting.⁸⁵ Clearly, English did not see himself as a renegade, and he disputed Waddington’s unflattering portrait of him, saying “having been misled by the tongue of some mischievous enemy of mine, he gave an account of me not a little fabulous.” In the first US edition of his narrative, English reported that he had received a written apology from Waddington.⁸⁶

In November 1822, English was once again in the spotlight in the United States. In an article titled “The Apostate,” the *Alexandria Herald* of Virginia announced the return of the Bostonian, “whose eccentric conduct has attracted so much attention,” and the publication of his interesting narrative in London.⁸⁷ In February of the following year,

⁸³ Moorehead, *The Blue Nile*, 204-5.

⁸⁴ George Waddington and Barnard Hanbury, *Journal of a Visit to Some Parts of Ethiopia* (London: John Murray, 1822), 114-115, 117.

⁸⁵ George Bethune English, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt* (London: John Murray, 1822), 47-48. The two men’s book share the same publisher.

⁸⁶ ———, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 47-48.

⁸⁷ “The Apostate,” *Alexandria Herald*, November 25, 1822. The *Herald* attributed the story to the *Philadelphia Union* but it might have originated in the *Boston Palladium*.

Wells and Lilly in Boston published the first US edition of English's narrative. The book was advertised several times by other publishers before Wells and Lilly published it, but apparently none of these publishers received enough subscriptions to actually make it worth publishing the book. Besides the author's identity, the American edition added several features. First, a map, "from an English one," additional footnotes, including an important note about his fellow Americans on the trip, and, finally, appendices containing descriptions of the Sudan from other travelers.⁸⁸

The first American publication of this mercenary narrative received much attention, and predictably reviews were mixed. One reviewer said the book would "naturally excite considerable attention," thanks to the "eccentric genius and extraordinary adventures of this young man, who is our countryman."⁸⁹ It appears that in the ten years since his public dispute with the Unitarian elite of Boston, things had quieted down. Another, longer review expressed "a strong feeling of disappointment" and opined that the narrative "would not immortalize" its author, from whom the reviewer thought "something better was to have been expected, and we trust, will be accomplished." This reviewer believed the narrative would appeal only to shameless readers "who prefer to behold Nature as she is in her most debasing forms, and that, which custom and delicacy usually seek to hide, stripped stark naked to the world." Even

⁸⁸ English says he was accompanied by Khalil Aga, an American from New York, and Achmed Aga, born in Switzerland but naturalized in the United States. English claims that Aga—who is not mentioned in the London edition of English's narrative—died on the third Cataract of the Nile, poisoned by a Greek because of a fight. The London edition also fails to include the narrative that opens this dissertation—the three Americans singing "Hail, Columbia" on the banks of the Nile. ———, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennaar: Under the Command of His Excellence Ismael Pasha, Undertaken by Order of His Highness Mehemmed Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt*, 15-16.

⁸⁹ "Literary," *The Columbian Star* 2, no. 8 (1823), 15-16. Also published in *Collections, historical & miscellaneous; and monthly literary journal*, March 1823, 92.

more worrisome to this second reviewer was the negative impression of American literature that the book was bound to make on the British reviewers at the *Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews*; the book would no doubt reflect poorly on views of American writing.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, the narrative was excerpted in US newspapers; Readers in Connecticut read English's observations on the Turkish camp and Turkish habits. In Maine, English's descriptions of Berber and the Berber people were published.⁹¹ Ten years after his run-in with three of Boston's theological elites, it appeared English was momentarily out of the dog house in the United States. His encounter with the Ottoman Mediterranean and Egypt, as well the mercenary narrative he produced as a result of the encounter, prepared and authorized him, ironically, as an agent of the state. In the service of the state, he would sacrifice some, but not all, of the personal sovereignty he enjoyed.

The Ottoman Mediterranean as a Gateway to National Sovereignty

In 1821, the year before English returned home, the United States failed in its initial effort to negotiate a commercial treaty with the Porte. In 1820 John Quincy Adams, whose influence on James Monroe's foreign policy was significant, had sent Luther Bradish to negotiate in Istanbul, but Bradish found little success—like many Americans he was uncomfortable with the tribute system, and the Porte was wary of negotiating with the United States, in part because of British advice, but also it suspected Americans of aiding Greek rebels.⁹² In St. Petersburg, US Ambassador Henry Middleton—a vehement

⁹⁰ S., *The New-England Galaxy and United States Literary Advertiser*, no. 280 (1823).

⁹¹ "An Account of a Turkish Camp from English's Narrative," *Connecticut Mirror*, February 24, 1823.

"Extracts from English's Expedition," *Hallowell Gazette*, June 25, 1823.

⁹² Americans were certainly aiding the Greeks, and the Porte was suspicious of the distinction Bradish, Offley, and others tried to make between US citizens and the United States government. For the Ottomans,

anti-Ottoman— opposed quasi-diplomatic missions like these because they endangered US relations with Russia. But Adams was either willing to suffer reduced friendliness with Russia, abandon his Philhellenic allies in the United States in order to get access to the Black Sea, or ignore the possible consequences of the treaty on international relations. Before the Greek issue came to the forefront, the United States was already negotiating a thin line in balancing its relationships with Istanbul and St. Petersburg, two empires that had fought three wars in the last fifty years. Following the beginning of the Greek War of Independence in 1821, this balancing act became even more tenuous and Russia offered the United States a wide-ranging treaty, which Monroe and Adams thought was meant to draw the United States into the war against the Ottomans. The President and Secretary of State both rejected this lure, professing interest in a treaty that would be strictly commercial rather than one involving political relations.⁹³ Yet in spite of wide-spread support in the United States for the Greek cause and opposition to relations with the Ottomans—Edward Everett, for instance, was a vocal supporter of the Greeks—the US executive branch continued to pursue relations with the Porte throughout the Greek Civil War.⁹⁴ English figured significantly in these negotiations.

sovereignty was premised on sovereignty over something. US rhetoric appeared to reverse this relationship. Sovereignty over self was said to be the most important aspect of US republican liberty. The Ottomans might have wondered why Americans, who appeared insubordinate to their government, should receive treatment in Ottoman ports equal to that of European nationals who were expected to subordinate themselves to their rulers.

⁹³ Bergquist, "Henry Middleton as Political Reporter: The United States, the Near East, and Eastern Europe, 1821–1829," 358-61.

⁹⁴ Edward Mead Earle, "American Interest in the Greek Cause, 1821-1827," *The American Historical Review* 33, no. 1 (1927). William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free; the Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (London, New York,: Oxford University Press, 1972).

“IN THE ORIENTAL DRESS”

In December 1822, English responded to a letter from Senator James Lloyd of Massachusetts, a fellow alumnus of Harvard whom English had written to for help in securing a government appointment. Though he had been severed from the Boston social order in 1814, English was not without obligations and friends in the United States. He expressed both his desire to serve the United States and his need for money to care for his father, who is “fast advancing in years, and who has a right to look to me to make his old age as comfortable as possible.”⁹⁵ As a solution to both these problems, English apparently considered several options. First, he could reenlist in the military, but admitted “it would not be easy” for reasons of which he said Lloyd was aware. He also considered a career in the diplomatic service, but recognized that the Barbary Consul jobs, for which he was most qualified, were all taken. Finally, Turkey appeared out of the question: “I do not suppose that the Government will think of a mission to Turkey till the affairs of the East assume a more tranquil appearance.”⁹⁶ English was not entirely pessimistic, though.

Where Bradish had failed, English saw an opening—both for himself and for the United States:

I have what I consider strong reasons to believe, that if I were sent to Constantinople and Egypt that I could obtain the tacit permission for our vessels to trade to Salonique-Alexandria-and the other ports of the Levant, on the same footing as they have long done at Smyrna. I say ‘tacit permission’ because I well know that the British Ambassador at the Porte would use his utmost endeavours—and an account of the present situation of the Ottoman Empire with great effect too—to prevent a commercial treaty.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ English never married, closing off one of the possible avenues of care for his aging father. Penelope, his mother, passed away in 1819, while English was still in the Mediterranean.

⁹⁶ English, *Boston, George Bethune English to James Lloyd, December 22, 1822*.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

If good words were needed to secure such a position, English counted former Secretary of War Henry Dearborn of Boston among his supporters, but he placed the greatest faith in Lloyd, whom he trusted “to obtain an opportunity to employ myself worthily, and I tranquilize my anxiety as much as possible by the confidence I have in my most valuable possession—your friendship.”⁹⁸

English acknowledged an earlier letter in which Lloyd had apparently advised him not to rush into anything, but by March of 1823 English was in Washington, DC. There, in a letter to John Quincy Adams, English proposed expanding American trade in the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁹ Claiming that the Porte favored expanding relations with the United States based on its good experience with American traders at İzmir, English attempted to mobilize his mercenary experience—not merely as someone who could pass or move effortlessly throughout the Ottoman world, but a person with real connections in the East—to secure a position negotiating equal commercial footing for the United States in other Ottoman ports. In his account of the possibilities of Ottoman commerce, English claimed the Ottomans were increasingly drawn to the United States, especially since the 1812 war with Britain had demonstrated “the growing power and great importance of ‘The New Nation.’” Furthermore, and related to his own troubles in the past, English positioned the United States as a secular power, saying “They are the more disposed to have a good understanding with us having been informed that our government have [sic] no religious animosities against them, and that by our institutions a Mussulman would be

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ ———, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, March 26, 1823*, Adams Papers (Boston: Reel 459).

on the same footing in our country as a Christian.”¹⁰⁰ In theory, at least, English was on firm republican footing. Scholars like Denise Spellberg have shown that the applicability of US law to Muslims and others was one yardstick by which the founders—or at least Jefferson—measured their success in formulating laws and institutions.¹⁰¹ Secularism—in this case the triumph of commercial over religious affiliations, was both an ideology that English felt comfortable embracing and one that would serve the United States’ interests in the Ottoman world. As English explained, “European nations who monopolize at present the trade of those Ports are considered by the Ottoman Government as the natural enemies of the Empire and only withheld from falling on it [the Empire] by their jarring interests.” Commerce with the United States would ensure stable prices for the Ottomans when the nations of Europe were embroiled in war and US vessels were the only neutral-flagged ships in the Mediterranean.

English emphasized his vital connections to the Ottoman world as well as his exceptional ability to pass as a Muslim in order to claim that he was the best person for the job. Speaking in third person, perhaps out of respect for his old professor, English described his unique pedigree:

The Undersigned believes that the circumstances of the last six years of his life give him advantages over every other American citizen as a medium of obtaining such a privilege [sic] from the Ottoman Government. Having lived among the Osmanli for some years he is familiar with their character and customs, has many acquaintances of high rank among them, has served in their troops, and contributed essentially to the glory of their arms: all which are circumstances obviously calculated to secure a favourable consideration of what he might propose to them.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Spellberg, *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders*.

English proposed traveling to Versailles “as an individual voyaging about his affairs without ostentation or pretense.” From France, he would continue on to Istanbul. Indeed, in his letter to Adams English embraced rhetoric that he considered slanderous coming from George Waddington: “On my arrival at the Capitol of the Ottoman Empire by appearing only in the Oriental dress I should be lost among the crowds of the immense city and escape the notice of the Europeans who reside there.” If, as Anne McClintock points out of Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, colonial passing can used as a tool of surveillance, here is a case where passing is a means of avoiding arousing suspicion among colonial adversaries.¹⁰² Lost among the crowds in Istanbul, English proposed that he would approach Mehmed Husrev Pasha, the Kapudan Pasha who is the minister of commerce and absolute authority in the empire’s ports. English outlined the benefits that would accrue to Husrev for facilitating a treaty: “he would gain for his country the good will of a people destined to become one day the most powerful of all the nations of the west and whose amity might hereafter be of value to himself [i.e. in a pecuniary way]” (brackets in original). For all this work on behalf of the United States, English asked for \$2000—about \$40,000 in 2012 dollars—enough, he said, to support a two or three month stay in the Ottoman capitol.¹⁰³

Two days later after he made this proposal, English sent another letter to Adams, clarifying his intentions to gain access for US-flagged ships to major ports in “European Turkey” and on the “Syrian Coast.” In addition, English suggested the US vessels could

¹⁰² Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 69-71.

¹⁰³ English, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, March 26, 1823*.

enjoy the same footing in Alexandria as they did in İzmir, if only an official application were sent to the Viceroy, from whom English had received a positive response through a minister in reply to his inquiry about American footing in Alexandria. English reported that at İzmir the Ottomans were struck by the Americans, and “pleased with such a proof of confidence affords to them, their rights and commerce the most ample protection.”¹⁰⁴ English promised his trip to Istanbul would further promote US commercial interests in the Mediterranean. On April 2, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams replied, approving English’s mission to Istanbul: “Sir, You are hereby authorized to proceed, on the Voyage suggested in your Letter of the 26th and 28th.” Adams apparently desired to keep the mission tight lipped: “You will inform me by private Letters of your progress and success, and will communicate as often as you shall have convenient and safe opportunities any information commercial or political which may come to your knowledge and which may be interesting to the United States.”¹⁰⁵ Two days later, English was issued a passport and a payment of two-thousand dollars at the direction of President James Monroe.¹⁰⁶

English set in motion the plan he had laid out to Adams, and after a sixty-day trip from New York, he emerged from quarantine in Marseille on July 18, 1823.¹⁰⁷ On

¹⁰⁴ ———, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, March 28, 1823*. It is unclear, though, if English still enjoyed the support of Mehmed Ali after his departure from Egypt.

¹⁰⁵ Adams, *Washington, John Quincy Adams to George Bethune English, April 2, 1823*.

¹⁰⁶ English and Monroe, *Washington, Receipt for Expence Money from the Department of State for \$2000, April 4, 1823*.

¹⁰⁷ The plague still troubled Mediterranean port cities; less than one-hundred years earlier, it had killed half the residents of Marseille, and in 1814 and 1815, Malta—an important hub in the Mediterranean, had experienced an outbreak of plague. Outbreaks of Yellow Fever also occasioned quarantine. It was especially common for European nations to quarantine travelers coming from North Africa and the Levant. John Macauley Eager, *The Early History of Quarantine: Origin of Sanitary Measures Directed against*

August 6, English wrote Adams to update him on the state of the war between the Ottomans and the Greeks, which he believed favored the Ottomans. He reported that negotiations were ongoing to put the Greeks under a Prince, as with Moldavia, while still continuing to pay tribute to the Porte. Most important to the United States, English reported that he had come across a copy of capitulations granted to France by the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman capitulations were not concessions made to European powers, but unilaterally revocable “grants of privilege” made to foreigners.¹⁰⁸ The document was in Turkish, but English said he had located a competent translator and would send the translation on as soon as it was complete. He concluded with his assurance to Adams that he was going about his business discretely and with the benefit of the nation in mind: “I did not doubt that you would approve of my delaying fifteen or twenty days at Marseille for the purpose of obtaining quietly and without observation translations of these Documents which may be of use to the Department of State in case the American Government should attempt to negotiate a Treaty with the Ottoman Emperor.”¹⁰⁹ English stayed in Marseille well beyond the “fifteen or twenty days” he suggested to Adams, departing for Istanbul eight weeks later. If he left the city to travel to Paris or elsewhere, English did not say. It is reasonable to speculate, though, that English spent much of these two months circulating in the homosocial world of mariners in one of the Atlantic’s busiest ports.

Yellow Fever, vol. United States Yellow Fever Institute, United States Yellow Fever Institute (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1903), 23-25.

¹⁰⁸ Feroz Ahmad, "Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations 1800-1914," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2000). The most recent Ottoman capitulations to the French were simply reaffirmations of previous capitulations, so English hadn’t really stumbled on anything groundbreaking.

¹⁰⁹ George Bethune English, *Marseilles, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, August 6, 1823*, Adams Papers (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society 1823).

English finally arrived in Istanbul on November 6, 1823, after a forty-nine day trip from Marseille, thirty-two of which he said were spent stuck in the Dardanelles due to strong north winds. English began his mission by furnishing a small apartment. In a letter to Adams dated November 23 he described the city as tranquil, which he attributed to the end of the Ottoman war with Persia and a brief respite from the troubles with Russia.¹¹⁰ He reported that the Ottomans continued to resist Greek independence because they knew the Greeks are destitute of money, divided among themselves, discontented with their chiefs, and they will soon grow tired of war. English's faith in an eminent Ottoman victory seems to have failed, however, and he doubts assessments that the Greeks will shortly surrender. Ever mindful of his debt to Adams, a consummate academic, English reported that he had tried to procure a copy of the Ottoman codes by the "learned Orientalist Dohsson," but advised Adams it would be cheaper to acquire the book in Paris. He remained confident that his mission to secure a commercial treaty would succeed, and cited promising news that Sardinian-flagged ships had recently gained access to the Black Sea. Finally, English cheerfully reported that Husrev, whom he met six years earlier in Istanbul, is again Admiral of the Turkish Navy and will be arriving back from Greece soon.¹¹¹

In the meantime, English continued to gather intelligence on the state of the Ottoman Empire. One month later, in another letter to Adams, English reported on the Egyptian contingent of the Ottoman army, which had been extremely successful in the

¹¹⁰ The Ottomans and Russians had went to war five times in the previous century, and as recently as 1811. The Russians, like the Americans, were supplying the Greeks, and war between the Ottomans and Russia would break out again in 1828. ———, *Constantinople, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, November 23, 1823*.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

Aegean, killing 5000 Greeks on Crete. But he decried the state of the war: “this detestable war is carried out by both sides with a ferocity shocking to humanity and which ruthlessly tramples under foot all those feelings and principles which distinguish man from the wild beast.”¹¹² English observed that the war had produced additional tension between the British and Ottomans, which might be helpful to the United States; British Consul General Lord Strangford had warned British merchants in Istanbul that a rupture might be imminent. English also described his intimate acquaintance with the Librarian of the Sultan and the Dragoman of the Porte. As a translator for the Porte, the Dragoman would have had significant diplomatic and cultural insights into Ottoman foreign policy in regards to the United States. The Dragoman could help English to communicate with the Reis Effendi, the minister of foreign affairs with whom English said he would attempt to negotiate if his efforts with Husrev were unsuccessful. According to the Dragoman, it was widely rumored in Istanbul that the US began supplying the Greek resistance in retaliation for the failure of Luther Bradish, whom the Ottomans believed was an official agent of the United States, not just—as Bradish claimed—a curious person making inquiries. The rumor was at least partly true. The US was supplying the Greeks with aid, or at least *Americans* were supporting the Greeks—not due to any particular feelings about Bradish’s failure, but because there was money to be made and a tide of anti-Islamic and pro-Hellenic sentiment in the United States helped to justify merchants’ extra-legal behavior.¹¹³ The Ottomans did not accept the blurry line

¹¹² ———, *Constantinople, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, December 27*.

¹¹³ Earle, “American Interest in the Greek Cause, 1821-1827.” Lawrence S. Kaplan, “The Monroe Doctrine and the Truman Doctrine: The Case of Greece,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 13, no. 1 (1993).

between the citizens and the government of the United States. The flag, after all, under which merchants sailed was what determined their relationship to the empire, its ports, and its rebellious territories.

English understood that this rumor meant he must be cautious and remain under cover; passing had become more important than ever. “I am I understand at present considered by the Europeans here merely as one who has traveled in the East and who visits Constantinople in an Oriental dress to have the greater facility to observe what is worth notice.” English claimed his ability to pass even under these tense circumstances allowed him to go deeper into the Ottoman world than anyone else: “under favor of this garb I penetrate almost everywhere and have opportunities of learning the mode of transacting public business of the Ottoman Porte which the European dress would infallibly exclude me.” Indeed, English thought nothing strange about saying “Among my neighbors I pass for an American Mussulman who has come from a far distant country to visit the Capital of Islam.” By imagining an American Muslim in Istanbul, English was in many ways embodying the ideal vision of republican government and its applicability to white men of all religions imagined by Thomas Jefferson and others decades earlier.¹¹⁴ Unlike Kipling’s *Kim*, however, English was not a fictional mimic man, and he recognized passing was an anxious practice: “my situation is full of danger and disquietude, and nothing but my determination not to disappoint by my fault your expectations with regard to me is able to countervail the anxiety of the singular task I have imposed upon myself.” English’s passing was also constrained; it only shielded him

¹¹⁴ Spellberg, *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders*.

from Europeans, and then only obscured his relationship to the state, rather than hiding it entirely from view. In the capital, few non-Europeans would have been fooled by English, and indeed he said that he was frequently denounced as a Greek spy on the streets. Under pressure, English worried about the unspeakable—death—and hoped that if he were killed, Adams would “shield my father whom you knew in better days from the distresses which menace his declining years.”¹¹⁵

After expressing his anxiety about death in this extended aside in the letter, English listed some of the details of US trade in Ottoman ports. France remained the most favored nation in the Ottoman Porte. In İzmir, Americans paid 15% at custom house, instead of 10% like Europeans. Besides lower customs rates, a treaty would mean the US could bring coffee, sugar, indigo, cochineal, and dollars to Ottoman ports. In return, the US would have access to drugs, gums, dried fruits, fine copper, and luxury goods. English recognized that imported hemp, cotton, wool, and finished silk were not much in demand in United States the time. But English was thinking beyond import commodities: “by far the greater part of the profits derivable from a free intercourse with Turkey would consist in freight.” In other words, it would be from the transportation of goods, not their sale, that the United States would profit. Here, English invoked the already well-developed narrative of US naval exceptionalism, expressing his belief that the “superiority of American ships and sailors would give them an advantage over most of their competitors.” The only thing preventing the United States from enlarging its commerce in the Ottoman Mediterranean was European jealousy.

¹¹⁵ English, *Constantinople, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, December 27.*

For these insights, English gave credit to David Offley, the US Commercial Agent in İzmir. For more information, English referred Adams to the agent's upcoming report, "Commerce of Turkey."¹¹⁶ Offley, a Presbyterian, was suspicious of English and sent a letter to Adams in January accusing the former Unitarian of having converted to Islam, which he said made English a subject of the Sultan. Beyond his religious prejudices and desire to remain the pivotal figure in US-Ottoman relations, Offley must also have been uncomfortable with the unexplained appearance of English on his way to Istanbul. English complicated Offley's long-standing business in İzmir; the day before English arrived back in İzmir from Istanbul, Offley was questioned by the local Pasha and forced to deny that he knew anything about English except that he existed.¹¹⁷ Offley had been in İzmir since 1811, however, and had almost certainly met English before. He may even have been involved with the 1818 report of English's conversion to Islam. Offley was even more uncomfortable now that the former mercenary was working as an agent of state, which might jeopardize the dominance of his commercial business—Woodmans and Offley—in the Ottoman port.

While Offley tended his business in İzmir, English made progress in setting the stage for future negotiations with the Porte in Istanbul. In a February 8, 1824 letter to Adams, he reported that in his final days in Istanbul, he was received by Husrev. Over coffee, English took a similar approach to Bradish, lying about his intent and telling the Kapudan Pasha that he was in the Ottoman capital on a pleasure trip, and that the

¹¹⁶ Ibid. Offley was appointed US Consular Commercial agent at İzmir in 1823, helped to negotiate the 1830 treaty between the United States and the Ottoman Empire, and in 1832 became US Consul in İzmir, where he is buried.

¹¹⁷ Wright, "American Relations with Turkey to 1831", 100.

government business was just a side bit. Suggesting, however, that the United States desired a “more intimate commercial relationship,” English wondered aloud what such a commercial relationship would entail. Husrev replied that no advances could take place until he investigated the Bradish affair. When they met again, Husrev claimed it was the influence of British ambassador that caused Bradish’s failure. Nevertheless, at the present time, Husrev believed it would be difficult to negotiate a treaty—probably because the Porte recognized the delicate state of the Aegean War and the perils of further endangering relations with the British over a small-fry treaty with the United States. Husrev, however, was willing to meet with the Commodore of the Mediterranean Squadron if the United States was prepared to deliver specific conditions for a treaty, which Husrev could take directly to the Sultan. The perceived advantages of this offshore approach to diplomacy was that it bypassed the step of sending an ambassador to Istanbul, which would have required the issuance of a passport and almost certainly have stirred intrigue among the Dragomans and diplomats in the capital. English admitted the Admiral’s conditions were not exactly the results that he promised to produce, but the best he could do at the present time. English concluded that the Greek cause was ultimately hopeless, and it would only be a matter of time before the Aegean crisis ended.¹¹⁸ Once things were back to normal in the Mediterranean—and Washington—a treaty would be less perilous to negotiate.

¹¹⁸ English, *On Board the Françoise Henriette*, *George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams*, February 8, 1824. Aware of the importance of military intelligence, English also included a summary of the Ottoman marine arsenal.

English returned to İzmir from Istanbul to find that none of the letters he wrote to Adams had been forwarded to the United States. Offley held these letters, claiming that no vessel had sailed for United States in the three months that English was in Istanbul.¹¹⁹ In a brief letter summarizing his mission, English offered no comment on Offley's delay. It is unclear if he realized how much the commercial agent disliked him. Back in Boston, English forwarded the letters, attachments, and packet of books that he accumulated during his ten months abroad, and made plans to travel to Washington to meet with Adams in person.¹²⁰ While English was absent, Adams had continued to receive letters from Henry Middleton, and the Greek cause had grown stronger in the United States. Middleton was aware that Monroe and Adams sent Bradish and English to Istanbul and he opposed both missions.¹²¹ Nevertheless, the Monroe administration continued to see negotiating equal footing in Ottoman ports as an important foreign policy priority. "All this is to be kept profoundly secret," Adams wrote in his journal of May 1824.¹²²

For his part, English maintained that a treaty was still within Washington's reach. In a letter sent to Adams the day after the two met in person, English once again invoked strong nationalist and exceptionalist language while continuing to advance his relationship with the Kapudan Pasha as a direct line to the Sultan. A treaty between the Porte and Washington was possible, English explained, because the United States was "a great and flourishing nation that has no prejudices or enmities political or religious

¹¹⁹ ———, *Boston, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, April 23, 1824*. Offley's claim is difficult to evaluate since it is unlikely that any ships traveled directly from İzmir to the United States.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Bergquist, "Henry Middleton as Political Reporter: The United States, the Near East, and Eastern Europe, 1821–1829," 361.

¹²² Charles Francis Adams, ed. *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, vol. VI (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & CO., 1875), 358.

against the Ottomans.” With or without his involvement, English genuinely seemed to believe that the treaty would be good for the United States. But, he noted, “it might still be well that I should be present for reasons which I trust are not unobvious.” English expressed his desire for “an opportunity to exert himself in behalf of our commercial interests in the East.”¹²³ Though he was embroiled in a bitter dispute with Boston’s theological elite a decade earlier, English still aligned himself with the economic interests of their parishioners. Even if he could not influence the religious life of the nation, he could still serve in a mercenary role in the schemes of New England’s merchant class. His service, though, was constrained by the growing dependence of the merchant class on the state and its institutions.

It was not just recognition of the national sovereignty of the United States in Ottoman ports that had English concerned, but also his own continued personal sovereignty. He looked to Adams as someone who might help shield him from economic suffering. At the end of one letter he addressed Adams as “a revered friend” and complained that he had arrived back in İzmir with only \$60 to his name. He hoped that the government would reimburse him for the expenses he incurred above and beyond his \$2000 stipend. Echoing William Eaton’s complaints from seventeen years earlier, English wrote, “I doubt not that its [the government’s] just liberality will at least prevent my disregard of self in this instance from being the cause of embarrassment, to one in my circumstances of serious consequences.”¹²⁴ Adam’s response to English is absent from

¹²³ English, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, May 14, 1824*.

¹²⁴ Ibid. A shortage of funds is a common theme in state department communications across the period of this dissertation.

the archive—but the liberal government that English embraced appeared to view English as a contractor, rather than an appointed official or full-time employee. Four months passed before English once again approached the President and Secretary of State about the Ottoman treaty.

While he waited and hoped for another government appointment, English returned to public life, publishing a number of important pieces on theology and social geography. First up was *Five Pebbles from the Brook*, a reply—which English claimed to have written while he was in Egypt—to Edward Everett’s 1814 criticism of *The Grounds of Christianity Examined*.¹²⁵ The book’s title, which refers to David’s selection of five smooth stones from the Sea of Galilee to slay Goliath, positioned English as the little man in the theological confrontation between himself and Everett. English’s self-published response was also timely—in 1824 Everett was embarking on a political career as a US Representative from Massachusetts. Conflating himself with David also marked English as a defender of Judaism against Christian bullying, while putting him at odds with Adams, a political ally of Everett. It seems beyond the pale to think that English was unaware of the politics of a renewed confrontation with Everett. So what are we to make of this? Was English attacking Adams indirectly for not supporting him? Perhaps he was truly committed to his criticism of Christianity, but why risk further trouble?

In *Five Pebbles from the Brook*, English connected his exile in Egypt to troubles at home and issued some of his strongest words yet against Christianity in the United States: “This work was written in Egypt and forwarded to the U. States, while I was

¹²⁵ ———, *Five Pebbles from the Brook: A Reply to "a Defence of Christianity"*.

preparing to accompany Ismael Pacha [sic] to the conquest of Ethiopia; an expedition in which I expected to perish, and therefore felt it to be my duty to leave behind me, something from which my countrymen might learn what were my real sentiments upon a most important and interesting subject; and as I hoped would learn too, how grossly they had been deluded into building their faith and hope upon a demonstrated error.” Beyond the theological argument he presented, English also defended himself against the gravest of accusations: “This book is not the work of an Infidel. I am not an infidel; what I have learned and seen in Europe, Asia and Africa, while it has confirmed my reasons for rejecting the New Testament, has rooted in my mind the conviction that the ancient Bible does contain a revelation from the God of Nature, as firmly as my belief in the first proposition of Euclid.”¹²⁶ English mixed the sacred with the secular, and finally triangulated himself by situating the United States in relation to the divine.

The question remained: if Christianity was so bad, then why was the United States so great? Because he rejected Christianity while continuing to embrace American exceptionalism, English was forced to attribute American exceptionalism to republicanism, rather than religion.

The good Christians of the United States, I do not use the term in sarcasm, for they are good, speak in their books and sermons of the Christian religion as if it were everywhere the same as in the grand, free, and liberal republic. But the Fact is not so. An American who reads the poems of Homer, or Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, laughs at the religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans as a ridiculous folly; but when he visits those countries in Christendom which are not Protestant, he will be inclined to regard their religion as a blasphemy against the Most High. Go where you will in those countries, if you look into their churches, you invariably find ‘a molten image, or picture, and a teacher of lies.’¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Euclid's *Elements*, a 3rd century BCE treatise, anchors contemporary systems of geometry and logic.

¹²⁷ English, *Five Pebbles from the Brook: A Reply to "a Defence of Christianity"*, 63.

Protestantism was successful in the United States because of the liberality of the republic, not the other way around. And US Protestants did not have a monopoly on republicanism, as English would demonstrate elsewhere.

On May 1, 1824 the *National Advocate*—a New York journal sponsored by Tammany Hall, published English’s report on the Jewish community in Istanbul. English was responding to a request by the editor of the *National Advocate*, to supply information on the lives of Jews in the Ottoman Empire. English positioned the Jewish community in Istanbul as a self-governing republic, quoting a French traveler who had described “the unique spectacle of a well ordered Republic, surrounded by Despotism, like a besieged city.” English continued to hold that the Jews had been the victim of multiple oppressors, always holding strong: “this people have given the world the astonishing spectacle of the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, openly when they could, and secretly when enslaved, for more than three thousand years, in spite of kings, conquerors, and nations, who have enslaved them so often, during that long period, and crushed them under a weight of oppression and opprobrium, sufficient to drive mad alike the wise and the foolish.” The Jews, it appeared to English, might be better off in the Ottoman Empire than they were in the United States.¹²⁸

This letter ties English to yet another strand of developing thought in the United States. Though he may simply have written the *National Advocate* article in return for payment, the *magazine* had an agenda of its own. The journal’s editor was Mordecai Noah, an influential Jew who had embraced both Christianography—Cotton Mather’s

¹²⁸ ———, “Jews in Turkey,” *Eastern Argus* [From the *National Advocate*], November 25 [May 1], 1824.

term for reading geography as “incarnation of scriptural precedent”—and the restoration of the Jews. As Hilton Obenzinger points out, Noah’s advocacy of these two projects made him responsible for the “injection of Christian Zionism into previously non-Zionist Jewish discourse.”¹²⁹ Noah and English’s lives have several parallels. They both labored in politics, and each held tight to US exceptionalism. Both suffered as a result of national politics. Noah was an early supporter of the Democratic-Republicans, and appointed by Madison as Consul to Riga and then Tunis in 1813. He was subsequently removed from his post by the State Department for overpaying to ransom eleven Americans held captive in Algeria and forced to pursue journalism.¹³⁰ For his part, English appears to have never made a strong commitment to Judaism, and certainly never to restorationism or Zionism. Instead, his attention remained on securing another appointment to negotiate a commercial treaty with the Turks—perhaps out of a desire to support republicanism or assist the few friends he seems to have made in the commercial world.¹³¹

An appointment finally came through, but the Greek war continued to complicate matters and push back his departure date. In August, English sent a letter to President Monroe from Gadsby’s Hotel in Washington, a copy of which he forwarded to Adams, commenting that “the interference of some of our well meaning countrymen [American Philhellenes] in giving aid and support to a war with which they have nothing to

¹²⁹ Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*, 25.

¹³⁰ Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1981), 15-33. Interestingly, Noah—owing to his diplomatic experience in North Africa—wrote a play about the War with Tripoli titled *Yusef Caramalli, or the Siege of Tripoli* in 1820. Critically acclaimed as the best of the four plays Noah wrote, the text of the play has been lost. Ibid.

¹³¹ Nor would have aligning himself with the Jews distanced him from Islam. As Spellberg notes, Muslims, Jews, and Catholics were all considered outsiders by most US Protestants. Spellberg, *Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders*, 184.

do....makes me feel very anxious about what may be the natural consequences of all this to our countrymen and to the interests of the U.S. in the Levant.” English acknowledged the President’s order to depart for the Mediterranean aboard *North Carolina* in two months, rather than on *Constitution* immediately. But he argued that Russia and Britain were unwilling to help the Greeks and that it was crucial for the United States to act quickly: “in this actual state of things, it is obvious that the U.S. have now to take the measures to remain uninjured and uncompromised of their own interests in the Levant.” He suggested it might be better for him to proceed to Gibraltar immediately in order to contact Husrev and alert him to the imminent arrival of the Commodore of the Mediterranean Squadron with a letter from the President.¹³² But Monroe apparently did not waiver from his cautious approach, and English was left waiting for his ship to sail for the Mediterranean.

English was alarmed by the delay. Three weeks later on August 31, he wrote to Adams after talking to him earlier in the day, “I beseech you, Sir, to engage the President to prevent the mischief I apprehend.”¹³³ Three months later, English had still not departed and he wrote another letter to Adams proposing a meeting the next day to ascertain if Monroe had decided to postpone his mission. English also expressed his hope that “if circumstances have rendered it inexpedient at present to give effect to what I have labored to accomplish for the advantage of the U.S. I may yet be afforded some opportunity in your power to bestow of rendering service to my country.”¹³⁴ In a

¹³² English, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, August 11, 1824.*

¹³³ ———, *Washington, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, August 31, 1824.*

¹³⁴ ———, *George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, December 9, 1824.*

postscript, English added that he had spoken confidentially with Henry Dearborn, who was under the impression that English was to depart with *North Carolina*. English worried that someone might have been “indiscreet” [sic] and did not want the blame for a leak to fall on him. He assured Adams that he had never exchanged a word with the person from whom Dearborn got this information. English emphasized his sacrifices to keep the mission secret: “for months [I’ve] lived in as much seclusion as possible, to avoid questions which some of my good countrymen have frequently endeavored to get an answer to.”¹³⁵ The personal cost of his service to the nation had become a cross for him to bear.

“THE GREAT SHIP THAT CAME FROM THE NEW WORLD”

In January 1825, English received official instructions from Adams to travel to Norfolk and report to Captain John Rodgers of the *North Carolina* and “perform such services as he may assign to you” as Commander of the Mediterranean Squadron. For his services as interpreter, English would be compensated at the rate of \$2000/year, from which he would be required to pay for his subsistence.¹³⁶ A month later, English wrote Adams to inform him that he was set to travel to Norfolk to board *North Carolina* for the Mediterranean. He acknowledged a message he was carrying for the Commodore, which

¹³⁵ Two days earlier, Dearborn had written a cover letter for a request from a group of wealthy Boston merchants who wanted the Mediterranean Squadron to cruise the archipelago in order to protect US commerce there. Dearborn wanted the squadron to go one step further and port at Alexandria in order to establish relations with Egypt. Wright, “American Relations with Turkey to 1831”. English’s seclusion might also have been influenced by the publication in New York of Joseph Wolff’s missionary journal, which might have inflamed the apostasy controversy from a decade ago.

¹³⁶ John Quincy Adams, *Washington, John Quincy Adams to George Bethune English, January 3, 1825*, Adams Papers (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society). A month later, Adams was inaugurated the sixth President of the United States. In contrast, William Eaton, who was appointed a Naval Agent in 1804, received the rations of a lieutenant on his mission to the Mediterranean.

was somehow related to the affairs of the Department of State. He promised to communicate the message “word for word as you have delivered it, though I doubt not that when you have ‘a successor’ to your present office, it will be in the way most agreeable of your friends—and the best friends of our country.”¹³⁷ Adams had been elected President, but had not yet taken office and was still serving as Secretary of State. Henry Clay would shortly assume that office in the new Adams administration.

By August, English was once again in İzmir. *North Carolina* had waited two weeks for the rest of the Squadron in Gibraltar and then proceeded to Paros and then Turkey in order to obtain information about the state of the Greek war as well as the location of Husrev. English reported the success of the Egyptian contingent of the Ottoman response to the Greek revolt; Ibrahim’s European-trained and -commanded troops were “irresistible in the Morea,” and Napoli di Romania was the only place of any significance in Greek hands, and only because it was under the protection of the British. One of the unfortunate side-effects of the ongoing conflict was an upsurge in Mediterranean piracy. But this time the threat did not emanate from North Africa; it came from the Aegean. In addition to preying on European vessels, English reported that the Greek rebels had pirated at least two US ships.¹³⁸

Providing protection to American ships around the Morea was just one of the reasons for sending the Mediterranean Squadron to İzmir. Another was to secure from Offley a copy of the Ottoman capitulations with the French, which would provide the basis for understanding the conditions under which negotiations of a commercial

¹³⁷ English, *George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, February 9, 1825*.

¹³⁸ ———, *Smyrna, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, August 30, 1825*.

arrangement might take place. English took credit for enlisting Offley into the mission, explaining in his letter to Adams how he had convinced the Commodore to be frank with Offley and take advantages of whatever services he could offer “and thus interest him in furthering a business which otherwise might *pique*, or envy might influence him to thwart.” English implied that Offley was a reluctant nationalist who needed to be convinced to value his country more than his own business. The Commodore “laid such strong hands of hope and fear on Mr. Offley as will I believe make him zealous in aiding the Commodore in the business he is charged with.” Finally, English reported that the appearance of the flagship of the US Mediterranean Squadron in an Ottoman port produced impressive results beyond suppressing Greek piracy or securing treaty documents. English commented on these more intangible results—the growing visibility of US power—describing the spectacle occasioned by visiting warship: “With liberality and great good sense,” the Commodore opened the ship to anyone who wanted to see. Visitors included “Europeans-Turks-Greeks-Arminians and Jews, in short a large proportion of the population of Smyrna of all nations and both sexes.” English links masculinity, power, and performance to US imperialism when he says that “even the rigour of Oriental reserve has in this instance yielded to the irresistible cravings of female curiosity to see, to use their own expression, ‘The Great Ship that came from the New World.’” In English’s description of this encounter, the Oriental other, in this case gendered as male, was overcome and feminized by the spectacle of US power. English concluded that the appearance of the squadron “contributed in no small degree to aggrandize the national character among the people of the Levant.” Yet the squadron’s

most important mission—contacting Husrev—remained incomplete. Rodgers made plans to depart İzmir in a week to meet Husrev in Crete and then go on to Napoli di Romania to gather intelligence about the prospects of the Greeks.¹³⁹

By December, English appeared frustrated. Neither national nor personal sovereignty were being affected by his mission. While the Commodore had finally succeeded in forwarding a letter to Husrev to establish an official channel of communications, English worried that support for the Greek cause would cause Adams to be indifferent to the Ottoman treaty. English argued forcefully that the United States could not alter the fate of the Greeks and that now was the best time to engage the Ottomans—“where national sympathy and compassion is unavailing to change the fate of those whose destiny we cannot mend it is at perfect liberty to push forward the interests of the United States in the Levant by bringing to a successful issue what has been commenced.” The Porte was “discontented with France, and highly exasperated against England.” English claimed that if Rodgers had been authorized to negotiate and provided with a treaty, he could have sailed to Istanbul and had it signed it forty-eight hours. English concluded by begging Adams to authorize Rodgers to negotiate a treaty, so that any response to the Commodore’s letter might be promptly followed by an official agreement.¹⁴⁰

Nine months passed before English’s next letter to Adams. Writing from the headquarters of the Mediterranean Squadron at Port Mahon in Minorca, English reported that negotiations were carried out in a “perfectly satisfactory” manner. The Commodore

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ ———, *George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, December 30, 1825*.

and Admiral met twice—in Tenedos (Bozcaada), at the mouth of the Dardanelles, and Mitylene, south on the island of Lesbos. Husrev promised to forward an account of these meetings to the Sultan and address the matter further on his return to Istanbul in the autumn after the end of his campaign against the Greeks. English was hopeful that “should the Captain Pasha retain at the end of the present campaign the same favour and influence at the Port which he now enjoys, I think, Sir, that there is every reason to believe that the reply of the Sultan will be favourable as you could wish.” Rodgers planned to send a ship to İzmir in November to receive the Sultan’s reply which was to be delivered to Offley.¹⁴¹

The Greek war did not conclude, however, but dragged on until 1832. In February, Husrev informed Rodgers that the Sultan was too preoccupied with military reforms to consider a treaty with the United States.¹⁴² And while he still retained the Sultan’s favor, Husrev had been dismissed from naval service due to the influence of the leadership of the Egyptian contingent in the Morea, with whom he clashed. In Istanbul, he was given the post of Serasker, or Minister of Defense.¹⁴³ As Rodgers noted in his letter “unforeseen & un auspicious events” had delayed the negotiation of a treaty.¹⁴⁴ In the United States, English’s old foe Edward Everett continued to support the Greek

¹⁴¹ ———, *Port Mahon, George Bethune English to John Quincy Adams, September 16, 1826*. English concluded his letter to Adams by excusing the infrequency of his reports, saying that he had not been writing as often as he should because he was forbidden by Commodore Rodgers from doing so. Apparently, Rodgers was exercising what is today called “strict operational control” over the mission. In a dispatch sent to Secretary of State in July, Rodgers worried that rumors of US-backed support for the Greeks would cause the Ottoman Porte to doubt US neutrality. Mary W. M. Hargreaves and James F. Hopkins, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Volume 6, Secretary of State, 1827* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1981), 201.

¹⁴² ———, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Volume 6, Secretary of State, 1827*, 827.

¹⁴³ “Khosrew Pasha,” in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, ed. C. E. Bosworth, et al. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), 35-36.

¹⁴⁴ ———, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Volume 6, Secretary of State, 1827*, 827.

cause, along with political notables like Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, both outspoken supporters of Greek Independence.¹⁴⁵ English's dream of a truly secular nation was not shared by many of his countrymen, who concluded that religion alone was reason enough to side with the Greeks over the Ottomans. In Russia, Middleton continued to hope for the destruction and partition of the Ottoman Empire, at the same time that he was obligated to respect the Adam's administration's agenda. When they met at his coronation in 1826, Czar Nicholas I asked Middleton if the United States had an agent representing it in the Porte. Middleton hedged and simply demurred that the United States had no success in negotiating a treaty with the Porte.¹⁴⁶

MORTIFYING DISAPPOINTMENT

English returned to Washington in July 1827. Meanwhile in Greece, the surging Egyptian military power within the Ottoman Empire was too much for France and Britain, who nevertheless hoped to keep the Ottoman Empire in place between themselves and the Russian Empire. At the Battle of Navarino, 20 October 1827, the Egyptian and Ottoman fleets were sunk by the combined force of the British, French, and Russians, turning the tide of the Greek war to the rebels' favor. A month later, surely disappointed by this development, English wrote to Secretary of State Henry Clay, asking for money he felt the secretary's office owed him based on his instructions from Adams in January of 1825—the agreed upon \$2000.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Finnie, *Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East*, 57.

¹⁴⁶ Bergquist, "Henry Middleton as Political Reporter: The United States, the Near East, and Eastern Europe, 1821–1829," 364.

¹⁴⁷ English, *Washington, George Bethune English to Henry Clay, November 16, 1827*.

In April of 1828, English—who vacillated between secrecy and public performance—was forced to defend himself once more in print when he was drawn into the so-called Morgan affair. William Morgan, a vocal anti-Mason, disappeared from Batavia, New York in September of 1826—probably drowned by Masons or possibly exiled to Turkey, where sightings of him persisted into the 1830s. In one report in the *U.S. Gazette*, a writer suggested that a reported sighting of Morgan might actually have been English, the former Bostonian whom the writer claimed converted to Islam and went to live among the Ottomans. English bristled at the suggestion that he might still be in İzmir as well as the accusation that he was a Muslim, dismissing both as ill informed: “by the editor’s statement of which I am led to infer that his knowledge of me is not quite so great as his malicious impertinence appears to be.” English insisted that he had been in Washington since July 1827, but gave no hint of where he was before that.¹⁴⁸ After a lifetime of defending himself against assaults on his character, English might have understood the political repercussions of giving away that secret. All was not lost, however. In July 1828, Adams was prepared to send English to the Mediterranean with treaty papers to deliver to Commodore William Montgomery Crane, head of the Mediterranean Squadron.¹⁴⁹

At first, there was no sign of trouble; Adams signed all the necessary papers and went so far as to invite English to his office, where he read out loud his letter of appointment and instructions. In a journal entry, Adams recorded that English “received

¹⁴⁸ ———, “Washington, April the 28th, 1828,” *Essex Gazette*, May 10, 1828.

¹⁴⁹ Charles Francis Adams, ed. *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, vol. VIII (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & CO., 1876), 60.

notice of his appointment with expressions of warm gratitude.” Samuel Southard, Secretary of the Navy had already notified the USS *Fairfield* to be prepared to accommodate English on its voyage to the Mediterranean. Everything appeared ready for English to return to the Ottoman world. Yet two days later, after meetings with Southard and Daniel Brent, Chief Clerk of the State Department, Adams resolved to send Edward Wyer to the Mediterranean instead. Adams wrote:

“Life is full of disappointments, and among the most mortifying of them to me has been the misconduct of persons whom I have peculiarly befriended. This case of English is one of the most mortifying that have occurred. I have repeatedly procured employment for him in public service, and, notwithstanding his eccentricities, approaching to insanity, have continued to favor him till now. I can no longer sustain him.”

Adams declared the verbal agreement with English null and void, because no letter of appointment or advance of money was handed over. Wyer was sworn to secrecy and told to be ready to depart in four days.¹⁵⁰ There is no hint of what transpired to cause Adams to reverse course—he was certainly aware of all the accusations leveled against English over the years. Without explanation, English was left without a patron and died of unknown causes two months later in Washington, DC.

During the administration of President Andrew Jackson, the Ottoman treaty remained on the back burner.¹⁵¹ But halfway through his first term, Jackson allowed negotiations to move forward. Wyer, like English, disappears where the official history of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Ottoman Empire picks up. The

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 62.

¹⁵¹ In March of 1829, Adams still had in his possession “a book containing the secret correspondence of the negotiation for the treaty with the Ottoman Porte.” Adams initially planned to hand it over directly to Jackson when the new President arrived in Washington, but finally resolved to give it to incoming Secretary of State, Martin Van Buren. Ibid., 110.

Office of the Historian at the US Department of State begins in 1830, with Captain James Biddle, David Offley, and Charles Rhind negotiating mutual recognition—the presentation of official, not mercenary credentials—and a commercial navigation treaty between the two powers.¹⁵² A year later, the first American Legation takes shape in Istanbul. These relations endured until 1917 when the United States declared war on Germany.¹⁵³ But 1922, the Ottoman Empire belonged to the past.

Conclusion: The Sovereign Afterlife and the Archive

In life, George Bethune English helped lay the foundations of sovereign equality for the United States in the Ottoman Mediterranean. In spite of his professed devotion to a secular, merchant state that would benefit greatly from equal footing with European nations in Ottoman ports, English did not receive the kind of recognition that would, perhaps, have sustained his life. Truly, he made sacrifices for his country. Yet he died, we have to suppose, in some anguish. What escaped English in life came following his death; in print he was favorably and widely eulogized as a singular character in the history of the young republic—a sovereign self. It is worth reading these obituaries in order to understand why English was considered important enough to try to preserve.

Of course several shorter obituaries with factual inaccuracies—typical for artifacts of this type and time—appeared almost immediately following his death. For example, a brief eulogy from *The Haverhill Gazette* recounts important points in English's life: he converted to Judaism, became a deist, and then became a Muslim.

¹⁵² By contrast, the United States did not recognize Greek independence until 1837.

¹⁵³ *A Guide to the United States' History of Recognition, Diplomatic, and Consular Relations, by Country, since 1776, Turkey*, Office of the Historian (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2013).

Finally, after meeting Joseph Wolff in Palestine, he embraced Christianity and returned to Washington, DC.¹⁵⁴ There is no evidence that this conversion ever happened; after their last meeting, Wolff wrote that English had not returned to Christianity, and in *Five Pebbles from the Brook*, published two years after meeting Wolff, English continued his criticism of Christianity.¹⁵⁵ These initial eulogies were followed by lengthier, more accurate accounts of English's life. A eulogy published in *The New York Commercial Advertiser* became the basis for other reports of his death in republican-era newspapers. This eulogy, as it survives in *The Rhode-Island American*, described English as "one of the most eccentric men of the age, and possessed of uncommon powers of mind." But the eulogist also cautioned readers that the life of George Bethune English was a "forcible lesson" for skeptics. In spite of his rebellion against common law and Christianity, English's life was worth eulogizing because "never was there a man more honest in his deviation from the true path-way than George Bethune English."¹⁵⁶

The obituary goes on to describe details of English's life. Unfortunately, as the eulogist pointed out, "the highest representatives of a republic generally pine in obscurity abroad, for want of means to live, and minor agents are left to supplicate for a miserable allowance on their return; and this is generally dealt out to them with supercilious grudging." The obituarist's criticism of a Federalist administration's neglect of its agents cannot help but call to mind similar criticisms of the Jefferson administration and its

¹⁵⁴ "George Bethune English," *Haverhill Gazette*, October 4, 1828. In fact, English had met the missionary in Alexandria and traveled up the Nile with him.

¹⁵⁵ Wolff, *Missionary Journal and Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Wolf, Missionary to the Jews*. English, *Five Pebbles from the Brook: A Reply to "a Defence of Christianity"*.

¹⁵⁶ Knapp, "George Bethune English."

treatment of William Eaton after 1805. But Eaton, though he drank himself to death six years later, had time to tell his side of the story. Autobiography was not a privilege that English had. The obituarist goes on to say that in Washington English was “a wretched solicitor for favour of any kind, and government did not seem to require his services.” This in spite of there being “one man in power, with whom the deceased was acquainted, that knows how to measure and how to value letters and science as well as any man in this country, and that man knows, too, how accurate was the information communicated by Mr. English.” However, the writer says “it is vain to repine; it has often happened, and will again, to the end of time that hollow-hearted and empty-headed vanity, by pertinacity and obsequiousness will snatch the *bread from men of understanding and steal away the favours intended for men of skill.*”¹⁵⁷ Ever a renegade, the writer seemed to conclude, deserved the recognition of the republic to which he was so committed.

The language of this obituary offer us some clues into the collapse of things between Adams and English, but not enough to come to any concrete conclusions about what caused Adams to turn against English so quickly. Samuel Lorenzo Knapp, the prominent author and former editor of the *Boston Gazette* who penned the obituary, went on to attempt to preserve English in US memory.¹⁵⁸ Four days after the publication of the eulogy, Knapp published a biographical sketch of English in the *Emerald and Baltimore Literary Gazette*. This eulogy includes additional information about English’s religious

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. A version of Knapp’s eulogy also appeared as “George Bethune English,” *Salem Gazette*, October 7, 1828.

¹⁵⁸ Knapp had his own connections to “the East” and to the institution of the Presidency. In 1818, he authored *Extracts of a Journal of Travels in North America* under the pseudonym “Ali Bey.” And in 1826, he delivered the eulogy for Thomas Jefferson and John Adams at First Church in Boston. Arthur Mason Knapp, *The Knapp Family in America: A Genealogy of the Decendents of William Knapp* (Boston: The Fort Gill Press, 1909), 36.

beliefs at the end of his life, which Knapp presents as decidedly Judaic.¹⁵⁹ English's actual beliefs—which we do not know—aside, it was much easier for Knapp to present English as a Jew, rather than a Muslim; Jefferson and others may have been able to envision a Muslim citizen, but most Americans had trouble picturing a Muslim neighbor. Recall, Samuel Cary, for example. In his 1813 response to English, he admitted that he knew some American Jews; he did not admit to knowing any Muslims.¹⁶⁰

In 1833, Knapp published a slightly updated version of this obituary in *American biography*.¹⁶¹ That same year, the naturalist James Ellsworth De Kay found space to praise English, who he had once met, in his description of Mehmed Ali in *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832*. De Kay recalled English's "Turkish immobility of feature," his ability to pass, and "the fund of anecdotes and information which his various wanderings in different parts of the world had furnished him with," all the intelligence that he had gathered as both a renegade and agent of the state. Like many of the early obituarists, De Kay lamented English's fate: he "failed through some unworthy jealousies on the part of his collaborators. While an applicant for office at Washington he died in great poverty."¹⁶² In 1860, at the same moment Joel Tyler Headley was writing about William Eaton and the Battle of Derna, *The New American Cyclopædia* further built on English's

¹⁵⁹ Knapp, "Biographical Sketch."

¹⁶⁰ Cary, *Review of a Book Entitled "the Grounds of Christianity Examined, by Comparing the New Testament with the Old, by George Bethune English, A.M."*.

¹⁶¹ Samuel Lorenzo Knapp, *American Biography* (New York: Conner & Cooke, 1833). Knapp's obituary was again used in James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, eds., *Appletons' Cyclopædia of American Biography* vol. II (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1887).

¹⁶² An American [James Ellsworth De Kay], *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), 488. In the same footnote, De Kay claimed Khalil Aga, one of the other Americans who accompanied English to Sennar, was still alive in Egypt. In the United States De Kay was praised for his keen observations for Ottoman life, but also of having an anti-Greek bias; later, he would be one of the candidates to negotiate a treaty with the Ottomans. A.C.D., "The Greek and the Turks. Dekay's Sketches [December 1833]," *The North American Magazine* 1834.

ability to master the Other: “At Marseilles he passed for a Turk with a Turkish ambassador who believed no foreigner could so perfectly speak his language and at Washington he surprised a delegation of Cherokees by disputing with them in their own tongue.”¹⁶³ These obituaries, eulogies, encyclopedic entries, and reminiscences insured English’s continued presence in the obscure corners of the archive. The results of his mercenary encounter with the Ottoman world were felt in the realm of sovereignty. His observations, though, were of marginal importance in establishing an image of Africa or the Middle East in the United States. For this, we must turn to the mercenary geography and diplomacy of the American mission to Egypt nearly fifty years later.

¹⁶³ *The New American Cyclopædia: A Popular Dictionary of General Knowledge*, ed. George Riley and Charles A. Dana, vol. VII (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1860), 204.

3. THE MONSTROUS GEOGRAPHY OF CENTRAL AFRICA

Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching,
Cheer up comrades they will come,
And beneath the starry flag
We shall breathe the air again,
Of the freeland in our own beloved home
George Root, 1864¹

In 1820, George Bethune English accompanied an Egyptian invasion force into the Sudan and produced an opium-infused narrative of his encounter. Along the way, English and his companions sang out “Hail, Columbia” as they crossed the Nile. Fifty years later, the sonic register of the United States once again echoed in Africa when Charles Chaillé-Long, a Union veteran of the US Civil War, presented a music box fashioned to play tunes including “Dixie,” “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp,” and “Johnny Comes Marching Home” to Kabaka Muteesa I, the ruler of Buganda, on behalf of the Egyptian government. Long produced three book-length accounts drawing on this and other encounters with Central Africa. Long’s mercenary narratives, set on the southern edge of what was only nominally Ottoman territory, helped to develop the racial geography that continues to influence US approaches to the Sudan and Uganda. Beyond simply borrowing from Europeans, Long’s representations of Central Africa drew heavily from the racialized landscape of the United States. In both Central Africa and the United States, Long understood the presence of free, black bodies as a threat to capitalist development. The monstrous landscape of Central Africa—pockmarked by violence and cannibalism, and haunted by disease and death from which whites suffered greatly—was nevertheless

¹ George Root, *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp* (1864).

important because the interior of the continent was rich in natural resources. As Egypt moved to put a stop to the sub-Saharan slave trade in the Sudan, ivory, particularly desired and valued in Europe, once again became the most important resource extracted from the interior. Long's strategy for securing ivory—what Joseph Conrad would later describe as methods—involved the creation of strategic alliances with some native Africans in order to maintain control of resource streams.² This mercenary strategy continues to shape the continent. Long did not originate the racialization of and tradition of mercenarism in Africa, but his accounts contributed significantly to the emerging field of ethnography in the United States and his narratives continue to influence contemporary treatment of the Sudan and Uganda.

In Chapters One and Two, I argued for the significance of the nineteenth-century Ottoman world to US national identity using memory and sovereignty as my analytical lenses. This chapter turns to geography in order to further explore the significance of mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world. I argue that Long's mercenary narratives helped to establish a racial geography that continues to provide the backdrop for US imperialism in Africa. Rather than refer to any logical geography, "Central Africa," designates a space of representation invented and tailored for Western and US audiences. Long's account—contemporaneous with those of more famous African explorers like Henry Morton Stanley—helped to bring Central Africa into being as the host of a variety of social, political, economic, and historic meanings that later figured US approaches to Africa in general. In this chapter I examine Long's different accounts of his two

² Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*, 57, 62.

expeditions in Central Africa. Long wrote repeatedly about these encounters, and my analysis focuses on two published accounts, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People* (1877) and *My Life in Four Continents* (1912).³ In these books, Long offered long descriptions of the Central African landscape. He ignored the effects of the transatlantic slave trade on the interior of the continent, focusing instead on the transformation of trans-Saharan slave routes into ivory trading networks. In spite of being enlisted, at least nominally, in an effort to eliminate slavery in Egypt's Sudan colony, Long did not lose sight of opportunities to extract additional human value from the interior of the continent through his ethnographic practices.⁴ I also explore Long's many criticisms of Christian missionaries in Africa and what this reveals about the particular vision of Central Africa that he proposes. I conclude by examining the contemporary landscape of Central Africa and the ways in which Long's monstrous geography helped to shape military formations and securitization in the region during the Cold War and the War on Terror.

Long is significant because he was the first among a group of about fifty US mercenaries who worked in Egypt during the 1870s to publish an account of his Egyptian service.⁵ His first book, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People*, published in New York in 1876, is also the only US mercenary narrative from this period to deal at length

³ Charles Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1877). ———, *My Life in Four Continents* (London: Hutchinson and co., 1912).

⁴ One of the questions that remains inadequately answered is how involved merchants from the British colonies in North America and the United States were in the slave trade in the Mediterranean. More than most people recognize, surely. The position of northern Africa in the transatlantic slave trade has implications for the ways in which the War with Tripoli *should* be remembered.

⁵ Later narratives included William McEntyre Dye's *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia; or, Military service under the khedive, in his provinces and, beyond their borders, as experienced by the American staff* (1880). R.E. Colston's "Modern Egypt and Its People" (1881). And in 1884, William Loring's *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt*.

with Egypt's Equatorial provinces, which today are part of South Sudan.⁶ *Central Africa* opens on February 21, 1874, the morning Long departed via train for Gondokoro with Charles Gordon, an English mercenary who had been appointed Governor-General of the Equatorial provinces by Khedive Isma'il Pasha, the ruler of Egypt. Gordon selected Long as his Chief of Staff, though Long later claimed he had been sent on a secret mission by Isma'il.⁷ *Central Africa* details two expeditions Long made during the next fourteenth months—one to Buganda and the other to the Bahr El Ghazal.⁸ Back in the United States a decade later, Long gave numerous lectures and published many shorter essays about these expeditions. In 1884, Long wrote a widely-read criticism of Gordon's administration of the Sudan. *The Three Prophets: Chinese Gordon, Mohammed-Ahmed (el Maahdi), Arabi Pasha* was published just a few months before Gordon's death at Khartoum. *The Three Prophets*, however, was not well reviewed. One critic complained, "most of the book is filled with rambling and confused accounts of the author's connection with Gordon in the Soudan, and of the Arabi rebellion. So exceedingly confused is it as to be uncomfortable reading. It is very egotistic, and full of a certain tone of dislike and resentment toward Gordon."⁹ After Gordon's death, Long's popularity declined. Five years before he died, he concluded his authorial career by penning a two-

⁶ Though this is the only recollection set in southern Sudan, Long was not the only US mercenary to work in Africa. Eugene Fechet, Erasmus Purdy, Raleigh Colston, William Campbell, Alexander Mason, Horatio Reed, and Henry Prout were all involved in expeditions to Egypt's interior, including the regions of Berber, Darfur, and Kurdufan. William B. Hesseltine and Hazel C. Wolf, *The Blue and the Gray on the Nile* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 120-148.

⁷ Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents*, 67-68, 87.

⁸ *Central Africa* ends with a short postscript promising an upcoming narrative of an expedition Long made to Africa's eastern coast in September of 1875. His accounts of the Somalian expedition of 1875 are all very brief and contain scant few observations. The reasons for this failure to follow through will become clear in the next chapter.

⁹ "Briefer Notice," *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine*, February, 1885, 222.

volume autobiography, *My Life in Four Continents*. This autobiography, published in London, is expansive, repeating and revising much of what he had already written elsewhere.

During his life, Long was recognized—beyond his criticism of Gordon—for confirming that Lake Victoria flows into Lake Albert via Lake Kioga.¹⁰ And though he was not the only American to work in the Sudan on behalf of Egypt, historians have been anxious to focus on Long's work.¹¹ This focus is, in part, thanks to Long's unabashed militarism. Historians William Hesselstine and Hazel Wolf contrast Long's expeditions with the scientific expeditions of the other Americans; they trumpet, "[Long's expeditions] were military and political; the only instrument of modern science he carried was an elephant gun"¹² In *The Farther Frontier* (1992), a collection of short biographies of Americans in Africa, historian Lysle E. Meyer devotes a chapter to Long, concluding that it is unfortunate he is seldom remembered except for his attacks on Charles Gordon because he was "an instrument of Egyptian expansionism on the eve of the European colonial partition and his activities comprise a fascinating story."¹³ Indeed, while the papers of other US mercenaries who worked in Egypt in the 1870s are held in regional archives, Long was a significant enough figure in US history that his papers were

¹⁰ Charles Gordon, "To the Editor," *New York Herald*, January 28, 1879. "Tardy Recognition for Nile Explorer: Geographers Present a Medal after 36 Years to Col. Chaille-Long," *The New York Times*, February 16, 1910.

¹¹ Long has also been described by geographer David Icenogle as "something of a dandy," and "a vain, foppish man." David Icenogle, "The Expeditions of Chaillé-Long," *Saudi Aramco World* 29, no. 6 (1978).

¹² Hesselstine and Wolf, *The Blue and the Gray on the Nile*, 149-150.

¹³ Lysle E. Meyer, *The Farther Frontier: Six Case Studies of Americans and Africa, 1848-1936* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1992), 100.

acquired by the Library of Congress.¹⁴ But I disagree with Meyer's choice of words. Rather than fascination, I look upon Long's account of Central Africa with horror, for it is indeed a horror story. I also recognize that Long's is an origin story that Westerners continue to retell as blackness and Africa are repeatedly conflated with degeneration and violence.¹⁵ While scholars like Walter Rodney have outlined the role of the West in the underdevelopment of Africa, in the United States, most of the blame—if we must use that word—continues to fall on Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium, and other European powers. In classrooms and books, the dominant storyline is of a United States disinterested in the nineteenth-century “scramble for Africa.” Similarly, the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, which established the framework for the partition of Africa, is often seen as an event that falls outside US history.¹⁶ There is more to nineteenth-century US policy in Africa than meets the eye. This chapter demonstrates that we must not overlook the presence of the United States and its mercenary representatives in nineteenth century Africa. The work they did continues to haunt us.

Back to Egypt

Long's account of Central Africa is organized around the Anglo-Egyptian geography of the Sudan. Egyptian claims to this region originated with the invasion force that George Bethune English accompanied as far south as Sennar in 1820. Just south of Khartoum on

¹⁴ Raleigh Colston's papers, for example, are housed at UNC. Samuel Lockett's papers are at Louisiana State.

¹⁵ As Achille Mbembe points out, “Africa is the mediation that enables the West to accede to its own subconscious and give a public account of its subjectivity.” Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 3. Representations of African degeneration and violence, then, work to reflect the progress and peace of the West.

¹⁶ Yet, to be clear, the United States was the first nation to recognize Leopold's claim to the Congo in 1874.

the Nile, Sennar was the limit of Egyptian power on the upper Nile until 1869. That year, the Khedive established Equatoria and appointed English mercenary Samuel Baker Governor-General of the province. Baker made little progress implementing Egyptian hegemony and returned to Cairo in 1873. He was shortly thereafter replaced by Charles Gordon.¹⁷ Accompanying Gordon into the heart of Equatoria at Gondokoro, Long had plans to go even further and extend Egyptian influence farther south, towards Buganda—with its capital near modern-day Kampala on the shore of Lake Victoria.¹⁸ Later, after he returned to Khartoum, Long participated in the administration of the Bahr El Ghazal, west of Equatoria and a significant shatter zone in a dynamic region bordering Darfur. Egyptian expansion in Africa in the 1870s, however, belied the decline in Egyptian fortunes after the 1820s and 1830s, however.

In the years following George Bethune English's mercenary service in the Sudan, Egypt had gone through hard times. The 1820 Egyptian expedition to Sudan was, at least at first, a failure. Mehmed Ali's son Ismael was killed by opposition forces and the Egyptian struggle to gain a foothold in the region lasted until 1828, when Ali finally established an enduring capitol at Khartoum. But even as he expanded south, Ali remained a subject of the Sultan in Istanbul and obligated to assist the Empire in its war against Greek separatists. In 1827 at Navarino in the Aegean, Egypt's naval forces were destroyed when they were cornered, along with the Ottoman fleet, by a combined French, Russian, and British task force. After Navarino, tensions remained high between Cairo

¹⁷ Alice Moore-Hall, *Egypt's African Empire: Samuel Baker, Charles Gordon & the Creation of Equatoria* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2010).

¹⁸ Buganda and several other Great Lakes-area kingdoms were eventually incorporated as the British Protectorate of Uganda in 1894.

and Istanbul as Mehmed Ali increasingly defied the Porte and pursued additional territorial gains in the Levant. If Egyptian forces had not been forced to turn back by Britain and France in 1833, they might have captured the Ottoman capitol. And in 1840, Mehmed Ali very nearly secured independence but once again encountered a formidable coalition of powers opposed to his plans. Having secured little beyond hereditary control of Egypt, he died in 1849. His successors were unable to maintain his legacy as a regional power. There were no more dreams of capturing Istanbul, but in 1863 Ali's grandson, Isma'il, became ruler of Egypt and embarked on an ambitious redevelopment of the country. In 1867, Isma'il was able to convince the Sultan to issue a firman—a kind of executive order—granting him the right to use the title Khedive. Beginning with Ali, the Alawiyya Dynasty had already been using the title, instead of the less significant Wāli, but its use was not approved by the Sultan. By the time Isma'il became Khedive, Egypt had significant relationships with France and Britain that would eventually draw it from the orbit of the Ottoman Empire.

In addition to the European powers, Egypt also had a relationship with the United States and the Khedive looked to the country for strategic reasons. Even as he was presiding over the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Isma'il was following in the footsteps of his uncle, Ismael, who had welcomed George Bethune English into his invasion of the Sudan. Well acquainted with the political situation in the United States and the surplus military labor accrued after four years of war, Isma'il appears to have envisioned many possible roles for American mercenaries, even if independence from the Ottoman Empire ultimately slipped from his fingers. By the time he began recruiting US

mercenaries at the end of the 1860s, Isma'il had already embarked on an ambitious expansion, both civically and militarily. In 1861, two years before he became the ruler of Egypt, Isma'il had put down an insurrection in the Sudan, signaling his intention to maintain Egyptian control of the Nile south of Wadi Halfa. This move was welcomed by both Britain and France, who continued to exercise significant influence on the government. The Sudan represented a valuable investment opportunity for Egypt and Europe. Isma'il also intended to further Egypt's claim on the coast of the Red Sea by invading Abyssinia—the role of US mercenaries in this invasion is touched on in Chapter Four. While Chapter Four is concerned with the representations of modern Egypt that were circulated in the United States by members of the American mission to Egypt, it also deals more closely with the Egyptian debt crisis, which brought Isma'il's expansion and modernization efforts to an end in 1877. In 1878, he was removed from power by the Sultan. After Isma'il was replaced as Khedive by his son Tawfiq, only a few Americans remained in Egyptian employ; several others remained in the country, however, and the mercenary world of the American mission, of which they were a part, endured until 1882 when the British occupied Egypt.¹⁹

In 1938, Pierre Crabitès concluded of the labor performed in Egypt by the US mercenaries, “America may well be proud of the work done by her sons in helping to win this empire for Egypt. Both the men who had fought in blue and grey, had worked together as brothers. They had been comrades in arms under a Muslim prince. Their

¹⁹These former Civil War combatants turned US mercenaries in Egypt have been written about in many of the same books that feature the US encounters with the Barbary Coast, Derna, and George Bethune English's Ottoman world. James A. Field Jr. in *From Gibraltar to the Middle East* and Michael Oren in *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* each devote a chapter to outlining the American mission to Egypt in the 1870s.

hearts had beat in unison when their kinsmen at home were writing that black chapter in the history of the United States known as the Age of Hate.”²⁰ In Egypt, these former soldiers were knit tightly, as Crabitès says—“united under one flag” after the end of the Civil War.²¹ After the end of their Egyptian service, their contributions to geographic societies continued to bond them together. Many of the sources I examine in this and the next chapter were based on addresses given in front of geographic societies in places ranging from Paris to Cairo to New York to Saint Louis. It should come as no surprise that so many former soldiers occupied the field of geography; in many ways, geographic science is central to military practice. After the Civil War, it was natural that geography would once again unite these former combatants. Hesseltine and Wolf recognized the significance of these mercenaries as part of the emergence of US imperial power overseas at the end of the nineteenth century, calling them “the vanguard of many thousands who, in the next three-quarters of a century would carry American knowledge, skill, and imagination to the far reaches of the earth.” And it was Long’s expedition to Central Africa that Hesseltine and Wolf identified as the “high watermark” of the mission.²² Long’s is one of the more colorful accounts of the American mission, and reads more like a travel narrative or adventure story than a memoir or history. It is perhaps because of this characteristic—his personal flair—that Long’s has been one of the careers that writers of the American mission have been most anxious to recount.²³

²⁰ Crabitès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army*, 272.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

²² Hesseltine and Wolf, *The Blue and the Gray on the Nile*, 1, 174.

²³ Long was also profiled twice—1978 and 1984—in *Saudi Aramco World*, the official magazine of Saudi Arabia’s national oil company (published in Houston, TX) Icenogle, “The Expeditions of Chaillé-Long”.

From Maryland to Central Africa via Alexandria

Charles Long was born in Princess Anne, Maryland in 1842.²⁴ Though he eventually served in the Union Army during the Civil War as a Captain in the 11th Maryland Volunteers, Long's upbringing in the Eastern Shore of Maryland surely had a significant effect on his later attitudes about race. Although most of the state outlawed the slave trade in 1783, it remained legal on the Eastern Shore, which included Princess Anne, the country seat of Somerset County.²⁵ There is little evidence that he had any significant role in the Civil War, and sometime after the Civil War, he began using the prefix "Chaillé" to gesture to his Huguenot ancestors. His emphasis of his French ancestry aligns very well with his anti-British politics later in life.²⁶ Writing in 1912, Long recounted how he, like many veterans, worked odd jobs after the end of the war. He served a three-year stint in the cotton-cloth industry and after failed attempts at poetry and drama, Long remembers, "I finally withdrew in disgust, convinced that my vocation lay with neither of the Muses I had invoked but with Mars."²⁷ He also claimed to already have a theater of violence in mind, recalling that as early as 1865, "I had quite decided in my own mind to seek my destiny in the Orient."²⁸ In 1870, he was one of the first Americans to arrive in Egypt. Later, he claimed that he had written a letter to the Khedive

———, "The Khedive's Cartographers," *Saudi Aramco World* 35, no. 5 (1984). Long also receives a passing mention in Alan Moorehead, *The White Nile* Revised edition. (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1971).

²⁴ Icenogle, "The Expeditions of Chaillé-Long".

²⁵ "An American Tragedy," Maryland Historical Society Library, <http://www.mdhs.org/underbelly/2012/11/29/an-american-tragedy/>.

²⁶ He officially changed it in 1870. Meyer, *The Farther Frontier: Six Case Studies of Americans and Africa, 1848-1936*.

²⁷ Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents*, 12-14.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

requesting a job.²⁹ Long's claim to have been a pioneer in Egyptian service may or may not be true—most of the US mercenaries were recruited by a trans-Atlantic network that drew on the advice of US General William Sherman, the highest-ranking military official in the United States. Many years after the last American left Egypt, Long revealed that “the main object of our service in Egypt, whilst ostensibly to reorganize the Egyptian army, was in reality to prepare that army for revolution, ‘to break the Turkish yoke and establish the independence of Egypt.’”³⁰ The likelihood of being involved in combat, he says, “caused many who had assumed it to be a pleasure tour to abandon the idea.”³¹ While Long was less experienced militarily than many of the US mercenaries who took jobs in Egypt, he was particularly skilled in the public self-promotion of his career there. In this regard, Long merits a comparison to George Bethune English, who also seemed to find his way into public controversies.

Long's most significant contribution to the Khedive's expansion of Egyptian power was the work he did in Central Africa, attempting to establish Egyptian state control over the ivory trade in the areas of present-day South Sudan and Uganda. This commercial development required material support—guns and soldiers—but it also required representational support—images and words—to help naturalize and justify the exploitative character of the extraction of resources from Africa using indigenous labor under Western regimes of management. While capitalism's effects were already felt widely across central Africa as a result of the slave trade, abolition did not spell the end

²⁹ Ibid., 15-16.

³⁰ Ibid., 17.

³¹ ———, “The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt,” in *C. Chaillé-Long papers, 1809-1918* (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 1912), 4.

of capitalist extraction of wealth from the continent.³² Over the course of the nineteenth century, ivory became one of the region's most important export commodities and Long's presence south of Khartoum is intimately related to new developments in the global economy, as Isma'il attempted to substitute money for slaves as the currency of choice in ivory trading.³³ Long's account of Central Africa at this moment of capitalist development helped to maintain "an image of Africa"—to borrow from Chinua Achebe—as a racialized space of violence from which commodities must be extracted using the irregular methods of mercenarism.³⁴

Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People

Long's initial account of his two African expeditions on behalf of Egypt, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked Peoples*, was published in New York in 1877 and drew from his July 1875 address to *La Société de Géographie de Paris*, of which he was a corresponding member. In his preliminary remarks to the society, Long quoted Malte-Brun, the Secretary General of *La Société*: "Egypt attaches Africa to the civilized world" and "is now the last portion of the civilized world which awaits at the hands of the Europeans the salutary yoke of legislation and culture." Long says he chose to publish an extended account of his address, "in the crude language of a soldier," in order to more faithfully recount his expeditions, describe the true nature and customs of Africa and Africans, and pay tribute to Isma'il Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, in whom he has great

³² It is better here to speak of abolition, rather than "the end" of the slave trade, which came later—or maybe never.

³³ For brief overviews of the course of events in the Sudan in the 1870s, see Alice Moore-Hall, *Gordon and the Sudan: Prologue to the Mahdiyya, 1877-1880* (London: Frank Cass, 2001). And ———, *Egypt's African Empire: Samuel Baker, Charles Gordon & the Creation of Equatoria*.

³⁴ Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," *The Massachusetts Review* 18, no. 4 (1977).

faith for the regeneration of Africa.³⁵ Long's account of Central Africa is intimately connected, then, to *la géographie humaine* that developed in nineteenth-century France, following the French invasion of Egypt. Human geography drew connections between landscapes and ways of life and its intellectual and political context were closely related to the colonial agenda. Long almost certainly encountered human geography during his own education, which would have included instruction of the geographic ideas of his day.³⁶

In writing, Long's purpose was to establish a human geography of Central Africa that demonstrated the need for constant Western intervention and management. Long began his narrative by rejecting romantic accounts of Egypt, accusing travelers and missionaries of being unfaithful in their representations of Africa.³⁷ He insisted that "nothing—absolutely nothing—of that grand and magnificent spectacle depicted by the pens of more enthusiastic travelers, who would make, to willing readers, a Paradise of Africa, which in reality is, and must ever be a grave-yard to Europeans."³⁸ As the origin of these misrepresentations, Long singled out one source in particular: "the quaint and

³⁵ It is unclear in the published account of the talk whether Long was quoting Conrad Malte-Brun, who founded the society, or his son, Victor Adolphe Malte-Brun, who eventually took over as the head of the society. Both were significant figures in geography. Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, v-vi.

³⁶ Martin S. Staum, "Human Geography, 'Race,' and Empire," in *Labeling People: French Scholars on Society, Race, and Empire, 1815-1848* (Montreal, Quebec; Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003). S. Griswold Goodrich, *A System of School Geography, Chiefly Derived from Malte-Brun, and Arranged According to the Inductive Plan of Instruction*, 11th edition. (Philadelphia: Desiler, Thomas & Co., 1835). R.J. Johnston, "Human Geography" in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, ed. R.J. Johnston, et al. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers LTD, 2000), 353.

³⁷ For more on the romantic vision of Africa, which was subsequently displaced by the image of the Dark Continent, see Adams and McShane, *The Myth of Wild Africa: Conversation without Illusion*, 3-23.

³⁸ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 125.

uncertain histories of that great Arab traveler, Ibn Batuta [sic], had become a model...where the naked truth would perhaps have been coldly received.” According to Long, Battuta was followed by writers whose desire for “fame and reputation” prompted further descriptions of “delight and ecstasy” in Africa.³⁹ Long used Battuta to establish an intermediate moment—a period of Islamic invasion and influence—between the turbulent colonial present and a racially ordered past. The Arabs who came to Central Africa after Battuta, Long says, were not seeking mystery, but gold, slaves, and ivory. He locates this history on the bodies of Africans, describing a process of amalgamation that led to “a change in the colour, and the typical characteristics of the negro of Central Africa.”⁴⁰ This new population existed side-by-side with native Africans according to Long, who observed, “among these people, however, I have noticed that there are many of the real negro type.”⁴¹ Rather than a landscape of pleasure, which he claimed Muslim writers had succumbed to, Long’s Central Africa was a racialized landscape that tested his manhood—a dangerous rather than a sensuous place.⁴²

Translated accounts of Battuta’s *Rihla*, a kind of travel narrative dictated to the writer Ibn Juzayy in 1355, only became available in English in the nineteenth century. Perhaps Long had read Samuel Lee’s 1829 English translation, which still circulates today.⁴³ The accuracy of the Battuta’s *Rihla* is suspect, of course; inconsistencies in the

³⁹ Ibid., 88. For a useful examination of Battuta in Africa, see Ibn Batuta, Said Hamdun, and Noel Quinton King, *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa*, Expanded. (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005).

⁴⁰ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 119.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Unlike English, Long does not admit to being tempted.

⁴³ Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta, a Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 4.

text were long thought to be due to Battuta's advanced age and the trouble he had remembering his long trip. However, recent scholarship, doubting the authority and accuracy of texts in general, has lent credence to the idea that at least some of the text is imaginative or drawn from other sources.⁴⁴ The same way of reading texts applies equally to Long's narrative, and his, too, is imagined and borrowed. How interesting, then, that Battuta's account of Africa, so different from European travelers of the nineteenth century, is generally positive in its reporting of Africa. Long's strong reaction to Battuta's positive appraisal of Africa is not just about a difference of opinions, but about the different purposes of each man. The Africa that Long found in Battuta's writing resembles early European accounts of the continent as a paradise—a place where people might desire to settle. But Long's Africa is no paradise; it is a site from which to extract resources by the application of mercenary force to racialized bodies.

In terms of the US racial logic applied to Central Africa, there are significant differences between the language Long used to racialize Africans and the language George Bethune English used fifty years earlier. In 1822 English used the language of the slave market to describe Africans—a bare capitalist approach to black bodies, typical of someone with experience in transatlantic commerce. Africans, like other goods transported across the Atlantic, were either ruined or not. It was their value as commodities or as objects of desire that mattered, not their value as evidence of one ethnological theory or another. In 1874, Long had available a much wider-repertoire of racial language for describing and dehumanizing Africans drawn from Hegel and others.

⁴⁴ Adel Allouche, "Ibn Battuta," in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef W. Meri (New York: Routledge, 2006).

In 1822, English could see the circumstances that left people degraded; Long could only see Africans as never-been and never-will-be civilized; they were, as Hegel claimed, outside history.⁴⁵ Before the Arab invasions, Long presumed, they were at least not out of place.⁴⁶ The racial problems that Long outlined were the central obstacle to the easy extraction of resources from Central Africa.

Long's sensational account of Central Africa opens the morning he departed with Charles Gordon for Gondokoro in the Equatorial provinces.⁴⁷ Long described how his friends in Cairo came to see him off, knowing full well that a trip to Central Africa was "a path of glory that led but to the grave."⁴⁸ Long and Gordon traveled first by train to Suez. There, even before leaving Egypt proper, Long offered a less-than-favorable assessment of the conditions on the edge of the Egyptian frontier, disparaging the British Hotel, with its "dirty Indian servants and abominable 'cuisine.'" Nevertheless, Long saw the Suez as "a jumping off point from civilization"—in short, better than what lay ahead in Africa.⁴⁹ After a three day boat trip from Suez, the party arrived at Sawakin, where, with a keen eye for commerce, Long noted the large amounts of gum Arabic moving through the city. On the borderlands of Egypt and Africa, Long also offered a description

⁴⁵ Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree, Great Books in Philosophy (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), 91-99.

⁴⁶ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*.

⁴⁷ Gordon hired additional staff as well, but he, Long, and Hassan Wassif (an Egyptian officer) were the first to depart. Moore-Hall, *Egypt's African Empire: Samuel Baker, Charles Gordon & the Creation of Equatoria*, 96. Another American, William Campbell, joined the expedition, but died of fever at Khartoum in October of 1874. Richard Beardsley, *Cairo, October 12, 1874*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Cairo, Egypt, 1864-1906 (College Park, MD: National Archives II). Crabittès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army*, 99.

⁴⁸ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

of the local people—saying that they resembled gazelles with bushy hair that they attend to “with greatest care and vanity.” He emphasized the fungibility of these racialized bodies, concluding, “a description of one will answer for all.”⁵⁰ Long failed to reflect that the same could be said of mercenaries. Instead, he positioned himself as the heroic figure in the midst of all this, repeatedly quoting Lord Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*:

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world’s tired denizen——
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless.

* * * * *

This is to be alone; this, this is solitude.⁵¹

These were to be the terms of Long’s encounter with Central Africa—Africans, all the same, versus Long, the Byronic hero.

After Sawakin came an eight-day camel trip, taking the same path as English fifty years earlier. Long and Gordon arrived in Berber and promptly took a boat to Khartoum. Not entirely ignorant of the Egyptian imperial project into which he was entering and conscious of Egypt’s history in the Sudan, Long recalled Ismael Pasha’s fate as the party sailed past Shendi, arriving in Khartoum four days later.⁵² In his description of Khartoum, the central city in the region since 1821, Long mocked the abolitionists and reformers who would champion Africa and Africans. Long predicted that a railroad to Shendi and steamer connections to Khartoum “will soon give [Khartoum] importance, not alone to its commerce, but will place a point heretofore remote within easy distance of an army of

⁵⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁵¹ Ibid., 8.

⁵² Ismael Pasha was burnt to death in Shendi shortly after George Bethune English returned to Cairo in 1822. Ibid., 4-11.

sightseers, sacred to them perhaps as a horrid slave depot.”⁵³ Long sees a racial lesson for abolitionists at the end of the rail line: “Europe, thus brought unceremoniously to the front door of Central Africa, may then, face to face with the negro fresh from his African home, compare him with the picture of ‘Uncle Tom,’ or the sentimental portraits that have depicted him as he ought to be, and not as he is.”⁵⁴ After only a few days at the very edge of Central Africa, Long already considered himself an authority on Africa and Africans.

Yet Long traced his authority over black bodies back further back than Shendi or even Sawakin. At a banquet given before his departure from Khartoum to Gondokoro, Long recalled his childhood in the “sunny south,” when he “stole away from the parental eye to Uncle Tom’s cabin, there to revel in childish delight in the dance, banjo, and plantation melodies of the happy Sambo.” He followed, injecting the melancholy of *Childe Harold* into the Reconstruction-era landscape of the United States: “the fiddle and bow of ‘Old Uncle Ned’ is silent now, and these scenes have ‘gone glimmering through the dream of things that were,’ to give place to the busy wheel of progress, that has crushed beneath its iron pressure the bonds of slavery in America, and made the slave, if a wiser, by no means a merrier man.”⁵⁵ Abolition, then, appeared to represent a kind of loss in Long’s version of history, both for himself—deprived of childish delight—and for African Americans, who remained “slaves” in Long’s monologue—free, but less happy than they were under the paternal bonds of the peculiar institution. Chattel slavery in the

⁵³ Ibid., 15.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 18.

United States had functioned for Long as a kind of laboratory in which he could learn about the nature of Africans. Now he was anxious to apply what he believed he had learned in the United States to Africa.

After a short stay in Khartoum, Gordon and Long departed together for Gondokoro, where they arrived twenty-six days later, passing through Fashoda along the way. While Gordon quickly returned to Khartoum three days later, Long stayed in Gondokoro, then continued southward, following, in reverse, John Hanning Speke's path as he traveled from Lake Victoria to Khartoum in 1862 in order to verify the source of the Nile. Long writes that his goal was to explore the region of Lake Victoria and further clarify the source of the Nile, which he called "the Eldorado of Central African explorers." Long was deeply invested in the Western preoccupation with determining the source of the Nile and wanted to validate Speke and disprove Samuel Baker's claims about the origins of the Nile—Long intensely disliked Baker. Ultimately, Long verified both Speke and Baker by locating and navigating a body of water that he called Lake Ibrahim (Lake Kioga), a body of water between Lake Victoria and Lake Albert.⁵⁶ In the pages of *Central Africa*, Long described his departure from Gondokoro at the end of April 1874 using several popular military metaphors. First, he said "the die had been cast," drawing on a well-known phrase attributed to Julius Caesar. Second, he quoted a

⁵⁶ In a letter written to his father from Gondokoro and subsequently published in the United States, Long concluded "Africa is a country accursed of God." "A Letter from Africa," *The New York Times*, December 8, 1874.

familiar aphorism that he attributed to Abraham Lincoln: it was “too late to swop [sic] horses.”⁵⁷ Long invoked both Lincoln and Caesar while once more quoting Byron:

Now Harold found himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long adieu.
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire, but many dread to view.
His breast was arm'd 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet.
The scene was savage, but the scene was new;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet.⁵⁸

Heavy on military and quest language, Long highlighted his own bravery while applying the language of war to Central Africa in a picaresque mercenary narrative.

BUGANDA: ESCALATING VIOLENCE

After two months of trekking through dense vegetation, Long arrived near the site of present-day Kampala and was received by representatives carrying the flag of Buganda, and then by Kabaka Muteesa I of Buganda at his capitol on Lubaga Hill. Long appears to have known little about Buganda's past, except bits and pieces about the country from Baker. In fact, Long arrived at the moment that Buganda was in the ascendancy over Bunyoro, a declining kingdom responsible for chasing away Baker in 1872 after he unilaterally annexed the kingdom to Egypt. Muteesa welcomed Long as a representative of the Governor-General and the Khedive, recognizing the benefit to Buganda of staying on good terms with the Egyptians while meanwhile continuing to export ivory to

⁵⁷ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 35-36, 41, 50. “Too late to swap horses” had been around since at least 1840, but it has been attributed to Lincoln in multiple instances, including in the context of the debate over whether or not to replace General Hooker before Gettysburg.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

Zanzibar on the eastern coast of the continent. With the British pressing in on both sides of this equation, good relations with Egypt were useful so much as they helped Buganda against Bunyoro.⁵⁹

Long's narrative of the reception he received echoes typical colonial rhetoric. First, whiteness is a condition somehow immediately recognized by and laden with meaning for native peoples. Long styled himself "Mbuguru," which he translated as "white prince." In a message he sent to Muteesa before his arrival, Long says he informed the King that "a great Prince would visit him, the great M'Tse, the greatest King of all Africa." Long adds "I meant Central Africa" in order to further diminish Bugandan sovereignty.⁶⁰ Upon his arrival, Long immediately located Central African violence—with which he already claimed to be familiar based on Speke's description of Muteesa—on the body of its leader: "from his large restless eye, a gleam of fierce brutality beams out that mars an otherwise sympathetic expression."⁶¹ In a confusing description, devoid of context, Long goes on to confuse political power with sheer brutality, claiming that thirty unsuspecting people were butchered at the welcome ceremony held in his honor.⁶² Whether or not these executions actually took place is not the question of this study. The truth or falsity of the events does nothing to render Buganda any more or less civilized than anywhere else that violence occurs. In Long's text, the executions simply function to establish that Central Africa is a violent, uncivilized place—the perfect place to

⁵⁹ Later, the arrival of missionaries would lead to wide spread unrest, with Protestant converts ultimately prevailing in a violent struggle against Muslims and then Catholics. Rita M. Byrnes, *Uganda: A Country Study*, 2nd edition. (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1992).

⁶⁰ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 90-92.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 106.

demonstrate white supremacy. After the executions, an interpreter explained that Muteesa simply desired to impress them with his power—the executed could have been prisoners or criminals or enemies of the state for all Long knew. But Long continued to insist that Muteesa's actions were proof only of African brutality, not African sovereignty.

Neither Islam nor the threat of sodomy figured in Long's appraisal of Muteesa, as they would for Catholic missionaries who arrived in Buganda in 1877. There is no indication that Long connected Muteesa's actions to Islam or homosexuality, as later arrivals did when they criticized similar executions carried out by Muteesa's successor, Kabaka Mwanga. Long's mercenary position, derived from his experience with the racial logic of the United States, was that Muteesa was a monster simply because he was a black man with power.⁶³ Indeed, Long's monstrous depiction of Muteesa intensified over time. Among the objects Long reported to have carried as gifts to Muteesa in 1874 was "a large mirror, with gilt frame, [which] was an object of great curiosity."⁶⁴ By 1878, the mirror had become much more than a mere object of curiosity. It had become a means for Long to read the internal state of the "proud, vain, and cruel" king. In a lecture given in Boston, Long is reported to have said "'no tongue may depict the impression upon this savage King's face as he looked into a large mirror.'"⁶⁵ By the time he retold the story in 1912, Long described Muteesa as "a monster of the type of the famous King of

⁶³ Jean Brierley and Thomas Spear, "Mutesa, the Missionaries, and Christian Conversion in Buganda," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 4 (1988). For an analysis of the missionary position on a similar mass execution carried out by Mwanga, see Neville Hoad, "African Sodomy in the Missionary Position: Corporeal Intimacies and Signifying Regimes," in *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

⁶⁴ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 114.

⁶⁵ "Egypt, Africa, and Africans," *The New York Times*, May 29, 1878.

Dahomey.”⁶⁶ The blatant racism of Long’s claim, and indeed the Dahomey metaphor in general—African life is brutal and cheap—is obvious; but Long does make a fair comparison, or at least an appropriate one if we read it in terms of the West’s strategy on the continent. Constantly cited for the cruelty of its rulers, Dahomey was Europe’s most valuable trading partner on the West African coast during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The King of Dahomey’s cruelty was useful. First, for helping to line the pockets of all the parties who benefited from the slave trade, and then for justifying the colonialism and imperialism which followed, often in the name of ending the slave trade. Even if Long’s efforts to draw Muteesa into a relationship with Egypt were not successful, it can at least be argued that the methods the West encouraged and rewarded in Africa produced countless Dahomeys.

Rather than reflect on the nature and migration of violence across Africa due to the slave trade, Long used his story about the executions to criticize the missionary tradition in Africa. Long says the cruelty he witnessed on Lubaga Hill validates Speke’s claims about Central African brutality against the slander of David Livingstone, who accused Speke of exaggerating in order to sensationalize. Long says Livingstone minimized Central African violence in order to deceive and encourage further missionary work in Africa. Once more, Long claimed intimate knowledge, which others lacked: “I cite these facts in the interest of truth alone, yielding to none in the desire to ameliorate

⁶⁶ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, 95. This comparison would have been widely legible at the time. For example, in 1864, *The New York Times* invoked Dahomey to criticize the conditions in a Confederate prison camp: “Even the King of Dahomey, when he would get rid of his prisoners, sacrifices them at once to his idols, or gives them as a prey for his guards to hunt. There is no slow killing going on for months; there is no gradual wasting of the bodily and mental powers by disease, and hunger, and want, and miasma, as under these Confederate savages.” “The Lessons from the Rebel Cruelty,” *The New York Times*, December 4, 1864.

the condition of the African. But in heaven's name, let those whose province it is to be the pioneers in the work, speak of him as he is, without regard to those who attribute to him virtues and ideas, that, if possessed, would render him no longer a subject for our commiseration and sympathy."⁶⁷ Long rejected religion as a useful instrument of colonization in Central Africa and ridiculed Samuel Baker for suggesting that Africans might be regenerated by listening to Psalms set to bagpipe music.⁶⁸ Instead, Long insisted that it would be "utterly useless" to attempt to convert Africans since they have no concept of divinity.⁶⁹ Long's Central Africa has no space for God—like Hegel's philosophy, it is racial spirit that is most important. Africa did, however, have space for mercenaries—militarized figures devoted to capitalism's mantra of development.

Like so many other white supremacist invaders, Long attributed his success in blazing a path to Buganda in large part to his equestrianism.⁷⁰ Among the technologies Long enlisted to travel up the Nile past Gondokoro to Buganda was a horse that he named Uganda. He had fond feelings for the horse, and claimed that it "kept me company in the long vigils of stormy nights that marked my absence and secured for me, doubtless on my entree as a Centaur at the palais of M'Tse, in Uganda, the honours of human sacrifice,

⁶⁷ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 107-108.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 64, 310.

⁷⁰ Accounts of the expeditions led by Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro emphasize how each invader used horses to terrorize indigenous people. Historians from Bernardino de Sahagún to Jared Diamond have claimed that indigenous people had no idea to react when they saw a horse for the first time. These claims are dubious, though horses undoubtedly can lend a strategic edge in combat. Bernardino de Sahagún, *La Historia Universal De Las Cosas De Nueva España* (1590). Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 76-77.

accorded only to the equals of African kings!”⁷¹ Among slaveholders in the United States, horses were a potent symbol of power. Indeed, as Walter Johnson points out, geographic governance in the South was determined by the range of slave patrols, which relied on horses. And “a horse added a fearful layer of wildness to the already volatile encounter of a white man and a slave on an isolated road.”⁷² However, Long’s invocation of the trope of the horse as a decisive factor in first contact certainly exaggerates the effect of the horse on the Bugandans. Lubaga Hill was not Tenochtitlan in 1519 or Kentucky in 1830. The Bugandans had seen horses and certainly would have removed Long from the horse had they wanted. Muteesa tolerated Long’s belligerent display of riding, assuming it actually took place as Long describes, because he understood the imperatives of diplomacy and trade.

Long’s methods of diplomacy were based on his understanding of Central Africa as a landscape of violence. Along with the music box that he presented to Muteesa on behalf of the Egyptian government, Long also presented his highness with several other gifts. First among these was a Reilly No. 8 elephant gun, identical to the one Long carried throughout the expedition. Long also presented Muteesa with something he referred to as a “Lubari” or a “battery.” The mysterious device appears to have been some type of electrical condenser—a Leyden jar probably—capable of giving off a shock; Long demonstrated it by knocking the King and several dignitaries down with its current. He had previously put on a similar demonstration of the device in Northern Uganda and

⁷¹ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 38.

⁷² Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*, 222-223.

concluded, “if I were an enthusiast in the idea of the quick regeneration of the African, I would suggest the use of the magnetic battery; it clothes the possessor with every attribute human and divine, and the negro yields a ready submission.”⁷³ Long called this technological terror “Lubari,” based on his belief that the word signified “firmament” in many African idioms; firmament was as close as he said Africans came to Divinity.⁷⁴ Along with the mirror, the battery reflected the Africans to whom it was applied: “I scarcely need add that each shock administered them (and they were by no means delicate ones), was received with shouts of laughter and Wah! wahs! of wonder and superstitious awe.”⁷⁵ Long concluded that “Lubari” and Uganda were his talismans and won success, where arms and soldiers would have failed. Later in life, he looked back on what he believed these technologies accomplished: the music-box, battery, and the mirror, he claimed, “raised me in the African mind to the dignity of *Lubari*—a sort of god—a *deus ex machine*.” And “the Arab horse won for me the prestige of a centaur!”⁷⁶ Again, Long can only explain his good-natured reception by the Bugandans as evidence of Western superiority and African inferiority.

In his sweeping appraisals of Buganda, Long painted the portrait of a place with no tradition beyond abject blackness. Once more, Long channeled Hegel, saying that the Bugandans belonged to “a race which ever strives to forget and obliterate the past, rather

⁷³ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 82. A Leyden jar is a capacitor-like device—essentially a glass bottle filled with water—for storing a charge. Devices of this type had been around for over one-hundred years and were capable of generating repeated, painful shocks.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 82-83, 114-115.

⁷⁶ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, 90.

than retain records of it.”⁷⁷ Long insisted this lack of history produced chaos that marked Central Africa as outside the modern world. Long even went so far as to claim that Central Africa lacked landscapes—except on the shores of the Victoria Nyanza, where he described “rolling and picturesque” country. But at the same time, Long described a productive economy. Here, in the supposed violent chaos of the jungle, Long catalogued intensive banana, corn, sweet potato, sugarcane, and tobacco cultivation, failing to appreciate the use-value of the development that surrounded him and fixated instead on potential exchange-value.⁷⁸ He was frustrated, though, by Muteesa’s evasiveness on the issue of the ivory trade. Blinded by his strong hatred of Africans, Long, who obviously expected compensation for his own work, was unable to understand why Muteesa might desire to profit from trade in the Great Lakes region. Long had little real success bringing Buganda or the ivory trade under Egyptian control; all he could manage was to write dismissively of the king: “like all Africans he was a great beggar and was never appeased.”⁷⁹ Buganda exemplified the antebellum landscape that Long so frequently invoked—agricultural and tended to by black bodies, yet he was enraged by the fact that the people in charge were not white southern planters.

Long did at least depart from Kampala on reasonably good terms. After his month-long stay in Buganda, he set out to seek a connection between Lake Victoria and Lake Albert. In his description of traveling along roads through the jungle, Long exclaimed ironically that “here, indeed, is the Africa of my boyish fancy! A hell on earth,

⁷⁷ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 121.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

whose rich vegetation and flowers, like the upas tree, breathe poison and death!”⁸⁰ By once more invoking this wild landscape, as well as his own upbringing, Long was able to move almost seamlessly from abjecting blackness to endorsing white supremacy; Long attributed his survival in this harsh climate to a “natural instinct,” which he said “seems to acknowledge the supremacy of the white man.”⁸¹ Based simply on his desire to do so, Long demanded to be allowed to navigate Lake Victoria. Muteesa demurred. The lake was not under Bugandan hegemony. Muteesa only allowed Long onto the lake briefly to take limited measurements. In his description of the Bugandans’ preparations to go out on the lake, Long again recalled Byron’s *Harold*:

Childe Harold at a little distance stood,
And view’d, but not displeased, the revelry
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude;
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
Their barbarous, yet their not indecent glee.⁸²

Long’s 1877 account of Lake Victoria appears almost muted. Later, he would claim Speke had withdrawn his claim to have navigated the lake in 1862. In 1912, Long said that this meant he was “the first white man to sail upon the Victoria Nyanza.” The honor, he said, was “purely sentimental” given that credit for the discovery of the lake still belonged to Speke.⁸³

Navigating Lake Victoria, however, was not the climax of Long’s account of his visit to Buganda. Rather, Long chose to make the climax a demonstration of the power of white mercenaries and their allies to manage life and death in the colonial world. On

⁸⁰ Ibid., 149.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 138.

⁸³ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, 100.

locating the outlet that leads to modern-day Lake Kyoga, Long was engaged by a group of Bunyoro soldiers in a short battle on the river. Long's account of this encounter carefully manages his superior position among the combatants. Long recalled when one of his Sudanese guard, Abd-el-Rahman, raised his rifle to take the first shot at the attackers: "when throwing off the horror of my position for the moment, I cried, 'If you shoot, I'll kill you.' His arm immediately fell in obedience. I told him that upon the first shot depended our lives: and I claimed it."⁸⁴ In his account, Long is not only the most skilled combatant—on whose aim lives depend, but he is also the best manager; Long utilizes Africans, in this case his Sudanese guard, to demonstrate his own manliness. This clash might have been avoided, though. In the first place, Long should not have been surprised by the attack; he refused to ask for permission or give a reason for wanting to travel down the river—the early stirrings of the Nile were in Bunyoro territory—when met by the kingdom's representatives. Long was also well aware that Baker had already stirred the pot in Bunyoro five years earlier. Instead of recognizing his own tactical errors, Long used the incident to position himself as superior not just to Africans, but to the English mercenary Baker as well.

If Long was superior to Baker, then obviously American methods for managing the racial geography of Africa must be superiors to British methods, too. Long applied many of the so-called American methods that he learned in the United States to Africa; on his expedition to Buganda, Long punished a disobedient soldier with fifty lashes delivered by the two Sudanese soldiers who accompanied him. As this transplantation of

⁸⁴ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 176.

American racial violence to central Africa demonstrates, the violent legacy of chattel slavery in the United States knows no borders. It was not intimate knowledge of the inner lives of Africans that helped Long in Central Africa. Nor was it the particular technologies with which he armed himself—rifles and horses were not all that new to this part of Africa. To give too much credit to intimate knowledge and technology in the expansion of capitalism into the interior of Africa is to fail to understand the significance of the two Sudanese soldiers who accompanied Long on his two expeditions—Säid Bagarrah, from Fashoda, and Abd-el-Rahman, from Darfur.⁸⁵ As Walter Rodney points out, “sustenance given by colonies to the colonizers was most obvious and very decisive in the case of contributions by soldiers from among the colonized.” Säid Bagarrah and Abd-el-Rahman’s military experience, probably more extensive than Long’s, was invaluable in the confrontations in which the three were involved during the process of helping to open up Central Africa to capitalism. Rodney argues that “colonialists were viciously using African soldiers as pawns to preserve colonialism and capitalism in general.”⁸⁶ And in Egypt, itself a colonial power, Sudanese soldiers were essential in the military. In 1863, 447 of these soldiers were sent to Mexico to fight alongside the French for four years.⁸⁷ By 1874, seven years after they returned to Egypt, these troops were stationed as far south as Foueira, a remote military outpost in the Sudan where they

⁸⁵ Both men were also affiliated with Sir Samuel Baker’s “Soudanieh Corps,” which had made an initial foray into Uganda several years earlier.

⁸⁶ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Revised edition. (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1982), 186, 188.

⁸⁷ Richard Hill and Peter Hogg, *A Black Corps D’élite: An Egyptian Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French Army in Mexico, 1863-1867, and Its Survivors in Subsequent African History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1995). Hill and Hogg’s text includes an image of Captain ‘Abd al-Rahmān Mūsā, who was responsible for Sudanese cavalry training. He may have been one of the two soldiers who accompanied Long during his two expeditions. *Ibid.*, Portrait Plate 14.

formed a key component of the zeriba system. Originating in the 1850s, this system of extracting wealth from the interior was organized around remote trading posts occupied by traders and supported by military detachments, a very similar arrangement to that of the western frontier in the United States.⁸⁸ The work Long performed for the Khedive did nothing to suppress the exploitive system of the zeriba. Rather, in the narrative of his second expedition, which he undertook after returning from Buganda, Long imagined ways in which mercenary labor might help to keep the zeriba system running efficiently.

After he arrived back at Gondokoro, where Gordon listed all the Europeans who had died while he was gone, Long concluded that these events were “proof positive that Africa, by some decree of nature, was marked as the exclusive home of the negro.”⁸⁹ In his account of their reunion, Long has Gordon translate the cost of developing Central Africa: “[Gordon] stared at me with ill-concealed horror, grasped my two hands in cordial welcome and said tenderly: ‘Come, let me photograph you; the world should know what it cost to solve the Nile source problem.’” In both Long’s estimation and Gordon’s photograph, it was a white body that made black Africa visible. This parallel mapping between human bodies and racial geography remained important to Long many years later. In *My Life in Four Continents* (1912), Long reproduced the photo, calling it “a precious souvenir of those days, and the reader must agree that it bears the trace of the

⁸⁸ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 40, 69. Paola Ivanov, "Cannibals, Warriors, Conquerors, and Colonizers: Western Perceptions and Azande Historiography," *History in Africa* 29 (2002), 100.

⁸⁹ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 210.

physical and mental suffering indicated by Gordon's exclamation" (Illustration 2).⁹⁰ By reading his own image as evidence of the cost to whites of knowing Africa, Long



COLONEL CHAILLÉ-LONG
ON HIS RETURN FROM THE EXPEDITION TO THE
GRAND LAKES
From a unique photograph taken by Colonel Gordon, C.B., October 18, 1874

Illustration 3: Chaillé-Long from *My Life in Four Continents*

effectively reversed the development of Western imperialism; instead of suffering from European incursion and violence as a result of the extraction of its resources, Central Africa was instead responsible for sapping the life from Europeans who dared to enter. Long—styling himself a God, a Centaur, and a Byronic hero—presents himself as, just barely, the exception to this rule.

“MAKRAKA”: CANNIBALS AND COLLECTING

On January 31, 1875, after a brief period of recuperation in Khartoum following his expedition to Buganda, Long departed for a place he called

“Makraka”—likely the Bahr el Ghazal—about 350 miles west of Lado. Long was optimistic that Makraka was an “Eldorado of health in Central Africa.” In other words, it was a place where soldiers might be stationed without suffering from tropical maladies.

From here, they could effectively administer the westernmost of Egypt's Equatorial

⁹⁰ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, xiii, 543.

provinces. Long's explanation of the expedition, then, was simple: in order to exploit the country's resources and affirm the authority of the Egyptian state, Makraka was to be occupied. But Long had other motives beyond simply securing the ivory trade in the region. In addition to the sovereign and commercial benefits, the invasion and occupation of Makraka would also produce ethnographic knowledge, he said, "unfolding the mysteries of the Akkas or Ticki-Ticki, and other strange people, whose existence vaguely signaled by both ancient and modern travelers, was still left, in a Gulliverian sense, in the realm of fiction."⁹¹ Indeed, Long did return human specimens to Cairo, but his most significant contribution to the emerging field of ethnography was his descriptions of a group he called the "Niam-Niam." In Long's narrative, the Niam-Niam are Central African cannibals whom he enlists in his mercenary endeavor.

Long's mission in Makraka extended beyond securing the ivory trade through whatever means necessary and included the collection of living persons, "antiqua," that he would present to the Khedive in Cairo.⁹² In *Central Africa*, Long recalled his "surprise and delight when Achmet Agha [a local trader] announced to me that he could give me a full-grown woman." Long referred to his first acquisition, whom he said was an Akka from the southwest, as "Ticki-Ticki."⁹³ Another of Long's acquisitions was "Goorah-Goorah." Unlike Ticki-Ticki, who had been enslaved for some time, Long claimed Goorah-Goorah was the "daughter of Munza, King of Monbutto."⁹⁴ Ticki-Ticki and

⁹¹ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 244-45.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 273.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 263-265.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 272.

Goorah-Goorah along with others whose names Long never gives, including an infant girl whom he claimed was also an Akka, were intended as types, which Long “hoped to present to his highness in the interest of ethnographic study, that might perhaps, establish, whether by type or language, that mysterious link in the origin of the human race, which want of tradition with the negro has committed to a most impenetrable mystery.” The “history, language, customs, and arms [of Central Africa] were illustrated by them, bringing what had been fiction or romance into the realm of reality.” Long claimed that Ticki-Ticki, for example, was “the first adult ever presented to the civilized world from a race vaguely mentioned by Herodotus, but whose actual existence now was no longer left in doubt.”⁹⁵ For these attempts to conjure up myths, Long would eventually be recognized by one of the preeminent ethnological institutions in the United States.⁹⁶

Twice in *Central Africa*, Long referred to this practice of collecting people as being “in the interest of ethnographic study.”⁹⁷ By the nineteenth century, ethnography was already well established as a field of study focused on describing the different races of mankind. More than just the present order of things, ethnographers hoped to reach farther back into history. In 1834, for instance, *The Penny Cyclopædia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* hoped that “a series of anthropographies, of different

⁹⁵ Ibid., 233, 263, 282, 303. And like material collected during the US Exploring Expedition (1838-42), the Mexican Boundary Survey (1848-55) and Pacific Railroad Survey (1853-55), Long’s acquisitions would become part of institutionally-sanctioned collections at the Egyptian Geographic Society and the Abdeen Palace archives.

⁹⁶ Before he returned to the United States, Long presented his ethnological and other findings to the Egyptian (Khedival) Geographical Society, which was founded in 1875 by Isma’il. Charles Stone was president of the society from 1876 to 1882. Donald Malcolm Reid, “The Egyptian Geographical Society: From Laymen’s Society to Indigenous Professional Association,” *Poetics Today* 14, no. 3 (1993).

⁹⁷ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 282, 294.

epochs, would form the true basis of ethnography.”⁹⁸ While early ethnographers produced mostly pseudo-scientific accounts of the origins of cultural and biological difference, modern linguistics offers more precise insight into the relationship between naming and power. For example, while “Niam-Niam,” is often said to be derived from Dinka for “great eaters,” Paola Ivanov traces “Niam-Niam” back to the “Lamlam/Damdam/Namnam” of the early Islamic period. Ivanov notes that by the fifteenth century, “the notion of savage cannibalistic fringe peoples became associated with the traditional geographical Arab dogma concerning the source of the Nile and the links between the African river systems.” The lexical component of this dogma “represented not much more than a vague notion of peoples who were practically unknown, but felt to be extremely ‘savage,’ located beyond the explored areas or even in the deepest interior of Africa at places favored for mythical creation.” Ivanov concludes that in European reports from the nineteenth century, “the ‘Niam-Niam’ idea was hardly different, despite claims to positivistic thinking.”⁹⁹ Ivanov goes on to accuse Long of betraying “what is even for his time an extremely disparaging attitude to the Africans.”¹⁰⁰ But a closer reading of Long’s take on the man-eating myth reveals not just racism, but also an embrace of these “cannibals” as important allies in the extraction of ivory from the region. As opposed to the missionary, who might find himself being “cooked in a

⁹⁸ *The Penny Cyclopædia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, vol. II (London: Charles Knight and Co., 1834), 97.

⁹⁹ Ivanov, "Cannibals, Warriors, Conquerors, and Colonizers: Western Perceptions and Azande Historiography," 93-95. The origin of “great eaters” appears to be an obscure encyclopedia entry. See Kwesi Kwaa Prah, "An Etymological Note on Nam, Nama, Nyam Nyam and Other Variations on the Word," in *Open Problems in Linguistics and Lexicography*, ed. Giandomenico Sica (Milan: Polimetrica, 2006).

¹⁰⁰ Ivanov, "Cannibals, Warriors, Conquerors, and Colonizers: Western Perceptions and Azande Historiography," 152.

pot,” Long presented himself as a man who could find common ground with the cannibal, coming to an arrangement that benefited the best interests of Egypt and the West.

In Long’s account of the expedition to Makraka, the people he referred to as Niam-Niam cannibals are probably Azande people. Long’s description of cannibalism among the Azande occupies a relatively small portion of his narrative, and he was careful to restrict the language of his report to the authoritative tone of the ethnographer, rather than a mere sensationalist. At no point did Long claim cannibalism was common or accepted. Long did, however, say that anthropophagy was wide-spread among the different ethnic groups in Equatoria, but claimed that the people west of the Nile ate human flesh only because they had been overpowered and robbed, or because their cattle have been the victims of poisonous weeds.¹⁰¹ Long even hedged at times, describing some of the women whom he handed over to his occupation force as “slightly anthropogenic.”¹⁰² Long’s case weakened further when he insinuated that one group must be anthropophagic because they devote their resources to growing yams, sugar cane, dourah, millet, watermelons, and vegetables in the rich soil rather than raising cattle.¹⁰³ Apparently Long could not understand how agriculturalists could get enough protein without resorting to eating human flesh. Colonial misunderstandings like this are common. In seventeenth-century colonial New England, the English linked property rights to enclosure—specifically for raising cattle and interpreted Native Americans’ lack

¹⁰¹ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 273.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 246.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 260.

of domestic cattle as proof of their inferiority.¹⁰⁴ Two-hundred years later in Africa, Long interpreted successful agriculture in the absence of cattle—and in spite of the violence of the ivory and slave trade—as evidence only of savagery. Nevertheless, cannibalism was undertaken with “intuitive shame” and only “those slain in battle, infants or the aged” are eaten.¹⁰⁵

Long’s original account of Niam-Niam cannibalism exemplifies the archetype of the Western encounter with the cannibal which critic Peter Hulme describes as “bereft of actual cannibals.” Hulme points out, “the primal scene of ‘cannibalism’ as ‘witnessed’ by Westerners is of its aftermath rather than its performance.”¹⁰⁶ Cannibalism works, then, to establish a clear line between the colonizer and the colonized. In Long’s narrative, boundaries were especially important because of the intimate martial relationship that existed between himself and the cannibals. At one point during the expedition, Long and his Sudanese escort provided heavy cover fire when the Niam-Niam attacked a group he called the “Yanbarri.”¹⁰⁷ The Niam-Niam pursued the Yanbarri, reportedly burning twenty of their villages and capturing thirteen women and children. Long reported that the Niam-Niam returned to camp at sundown later that day. However, they remained at a distance from Long and his escort. Long set the scene: “that night, at places without the cordon of sentinels, fires were burning whose fitful flame and glare proclaimed the presence of more inflammable matter than wood, even if an odour of burnt flesh did not

¹⁰⁴ William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, First Revised Edition. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003).

¹⁰⁵ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 246, 260, 273.

¹⁰⁶ Peter Hulme, “Introduction: The Cannibal Scene,” in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2-3.

¹⁰⁷ Possibly elements of the Nyangwara people.

indicate it more plainly to the olfactories.” It dawned on Long that he should have known to expect cannibalism: “Horresco referens! The meat that I had promised them was, without a doubt, the unlucky Yanbarri ‘potted’ that day.” But Long never actually witnessed the cannibalism, explaining that “I did not care to investigate the matter closely, appreciating the delicacy of their retirement from camp, and as well feeling here the force of the maxim, that ‘where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise’”¹⁰⁸ In his 1877 account, the smell of burnt flesh was the closest Long came to actual cannibalism. A missionary might try to reform these cannibals; Long concentrated on making them into Egyptian allies for the extraction of ivory from the region. Neither a missionary nor an abolitionist, Long was concerned with upholding the Egyptian claim of sovereignty over the Bahr Al Ghazal.

Alliances with cannibals was one component of Long’s strategy for establishing Egyptian hegemony. Another part of his strategy was supporting the allies Egypt already had. As part of the plan to abolish the slave trade and establish authority over the ivory trade, Long described a scene reminiscent of the plantation economy of the United States. When the expedition arrived at a friendly zeriba in Makraka, Long found that the Arab trader running the station had a collection of 300-400 young women, appraising that they “could not be considered slaves, since they remained by their own free will.” In spite of this—their free will—Long “took possession of them as refugees.”¹⁰⁹ But freedom from slavery did not mean these women were free from their obligation to the state. Although

¹⁰⁸ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 286-287.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 259.

they were originally classified as refugees, Long shortly distributed them for marriage among the soldiers of his occupation force.¹¹⁰ Long's deep desire for the Antebellum racial order—expressed elsewhere as the longing for the anachronistic space of the slave quarters—was fulfilled by distributing captured women among his soldiers in order to establish the foundations of a new African workforce. The reproductive tangles of chattel slavery haunt Long's approach, and his actions echo the “phallic power” exercised by slave owners who labored to reproduce enslaved bodies in the United States and elsewhere.¹¹¹

In an 1887 article in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*—after Gordon's death but before Herbert Kitchener's reconquest of Khartoum—Long reflected on his paternal act: “what has become of my military colony among the Niam-Niam during these last ten years no one has been able to tell me.”¹¹² In the same article Long also slightly altered the story of his encounter with cannibals, saying “in the vicinity of my camp there were significant piles of human bones and skulls. Many of these were the remains of those who had died of smallpox, but horrible to relate, the most of them were the relics of a feast!”¹¹³ 1887 would not be the last time Long added details to satisfy audiences hungry for tales of African violence. In his 1912 account of the expedition to Makraka, Long told an entirely different story. Thirty years after he led an invasion and occupation force into

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*, 195.

¹¹² Charles Chaillé-Long, “The Black and Brown People of the Soudan,” *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, July, 1887, 355.

¹¹³ Ibid., 366. By 1887, Long appeared to have forgotten about ivory, concluding that “for a fact, the study of man is the only vital interest which attaches to Central Africa. Neither its climate nor its traffic offers material inducement to the commercial spirit of the times.” Of the racial trouble presented by the Sudan, he says “the black man, not unlike the redskin, disdains our civilization, not, perhaps, without an atom of reason, for it reaches him largely adulterated with rum.” Ibid., 358.

the Bahr al Ghazal, Long had to contend with a hardened tradition of misrepresentations of Africans. From Tarzan to Theodore Roosevelt, “Wild Africa” and “the Dark Continent” had become the foundational site for the formation of potent white masculinity; Long could no longer afford to hedge about cannibalism. Now, he described the human geography of the region quite simply: “the Ticki-Ticki, like Niam-Niam and tribes west of the Nile, are cannibals.” No longer was cannibalism a dire necessity resulting from want of food, but rather human flesh was “a delicacy,” though “not to be had every day.” Long not only claimed more responsibility for the destruction of the Yanbarri—“I reluctantly burned their villages and inflicted great loss upon them in order to open the road”—but also claimed to have witnessed cannibalism firsthand: “curious, I approached and beheld the Niam-Niams greedily feasting upon their roasting rivals.”¹¹⁴ Central Africa was even more monstrous in 1912 than in 1877.

Long also once more invoked the racialized space of the American plantation and the figure of Uncle Ned to describe the wedding ceremony that followed his transfer of female property from slave traders to the military: “rude it certainly was, but in striking resemblance to the dances of the old plantation in the days before the war of the States, and when the fiddle and bow of ‘Old Uncle Ned’ was a characteristic feature in the life of the once picturesque negro.” In retrospect, Long also drew a stronger comparison between the racial landscape of the United States and Africa than he had before, saying that he found the “giddy gyrations and eccentric evolutions of a dance strangely like the

¹¹⁴ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, 127, 134.

cakewalk of the Afro-American.”¹¹⁵ Long claimed Central Africa was the evolutionary home of black Americans, but it was not any specific African cultural tradition that Long could identify that connected the two places, but his own racial consciousness, haunted by the memory of the racial order of antebellum South Shore Maryland. Driven by these genealogical urges, Long and others like him were early pioneers in the practices of racial typology and collecting.

Following the collecting of peoples, the planting of an Egyptian occupation force, and the destruction of the Yanbarri, Long made his way back to Lado with 600 elephant tusks carried by his new allies. He shortly thereafter departed from the Equatorial provinces, “to regain the life [he] left behind in Central and Oriental Africa.”¹¹⁶ He would do further work for the Khedive as a surveyor in preparation for the Egyptian invasion of Abyssinia in 1876, but found very little worth recounting on that expedition. In a summary of his time spent in the Equatorial provinces, Long concluded that “Central Africa is no Paradise, but a plague spot—and that the negro, the product of this pestilential region, is a miserable wretch, often devoid of all tradition or belief in a Deity, which enthusiastic travelers have heretofore endeavoured to endow him with.” He continued, “the humanitarian may pause to consider the cost at which he sends his emissaries, in the laudable effort to humanize and civilize a country, where nature has placed a barrier, not alone in the poisoned arrow of the savage—but in the more deadly

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 132-133.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., xiv, 251.

poisoned air.”¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the logic of capitalism dictated that commodities continue to be extracted because of their monetary value, and Long’s account offered a blueprint for extracting these commodities at a minimum cost to outsiders.

One of Pierre Crabitès’ claims in *Americans in the Egyptian Army* in 1938 was that the American mission, of which Long was an important member, helped to end slavery in the Sudan.¹¹⁸ Crabitès was responding to the claims of other historians who credited Europeans for bringing an end to slavery in Africa. Crabitès, therefore, positioned the United States as a more important participant in the “civilizing mission” in Africa than had been previously acknowledged. But how are we to understand Crabitès’ claim if Long’s narrative is to be believed? Crabitès relies on a positive assessment of the impact of Western power on Africa, yet what we see recorded in the pages of Long’s narrative is kidnapping, killing, and theft. If anything, the anti-slavery discourse of the West and the logic of intervention worked to install a new system of exploitative labor every bit as insidious as slavery. Managing racial difference was a key component of this system, which was focused on extracting non-human wealth from the continent. In the Sudan, the extraction of non-human capital was pioneered by Samuel Baker. Baker’s operation—which helped to militarize the Sudan in ways that are painfully apparent to contemporary observers—was costly and contributed to the Egyptian debt crisis, which plays a key role in the next chapter. Despite Long’s sarcastic description of Baker’s methods—bagpipes—Baker was not the missionary that Long made him out to be; Baker

¹¹⁷ ———, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 309.

¹¹⁸ Crabitès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army*, 31.

was a wealthy adventurer before he was a mercenary. And though Baker and his replacement Gordon were apparently both more affected by the Gospel than Long, all these men were hired hands. These mercenaries were important brokers of capitalist exchange, and Long's experience with US racial governmentality shaped his attempt to make the Equatorial provinces profitable.

Long envisioned mercenaries as important figures in Central Africa. Since the landscape he wrote into existence was a wasteland inhospitable to outsiders—even the Sudanese troops from the north—Central Africans would need to be enlisted in the extraction of commodities from the interior. For this labor, Long singled out a group he calls the “Dongolowee.”¹¹⁹ He described these perfect Central African mercenaries: “eminently fitted for the hard and arduous service...the Bedouin of Upper Nubia, without traditions and without a country, save the jungle of Africa.”¹²⁰ He estimated, “under a proper regime of discipline, and the selection of good men that I know among them, I regard them as the great future civilizing element for the redemption of this country since the white man and the Arab cannot permanently dwell in its pernicious climate.”¹²¹ The only problem Long could find with his scheme was that the Sudanese soldiers viewed themselves as superior to the Dongolowee, who “could not but look with displeasure upon [their] dispossession, and the enforcement of order and justice.” Long claimed that

¹¹⁹ Dongolawi is a northern Sudanese language group. So it is unclear exactly who Long is talking about.

¹²⁰ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 48.

¹²¹ Ibid., 311. In 1881, R.E. Colston either agreed with or simply repeated Long's claim when he said that “The best regiments in the Egyptian service are those formed of negroes from Central Africa.... There is a great deal more fight in these men, who probably were warriors in their own country, than in the fellaheen regiments.” R.E. Colston, “Modern Egypt and Its People,” *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 13 (1881).

the removal of the Arab agents of the ivory trade would provide the Dongolowee with some relief. Unfortunately, the removal of the Arab agents was impossible, for their harsh management of the Africans was “an element that is almost a necessity in the occupation of that country.” Long argued that so far Egypt had failed to exploit Dongolowee labor. “Certainly in the great trade in its ivory they could have been made an instrument of progress and civilization; for, with all their faults, these rude children of the jungle have many generous qualities, and are exceedingly tractable.”¹²² Just a hundred years earlier, men like Long might have accompanied slave-raiding parties into the interior of West Africa. Now, they were hatching schemes to “civilize” nomadic people in order to enlist them as laborers in the extraction of resources. While the resources were different one-hundred years earlier—ivory versus humans—the system remained essentially the same.¹²³

Even with African collaborators, Central Africa would not be an easy place to manage. Long once again drew on his experience in the United States in order to express his anxiety about the complicated labor market of a post-slavery Sudan. Long drew a link between political economies on both sides of the Atlantic—in the United States and Central Africa, Africans and their labor represented a potent force, either aiding or threatening economic expansion. Long was not as enthusiastic about the end of slavery as Crabitès supposed. In fact, Long claimed all the Egyptian labor trouble began when the

¹²² Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 48.

¹²³ One can, no doubt, see the parallels between the borders between people drawn out at the Berlin conference as similar to the designation of tribal reservations in the United States. In the United States, the borders between states mark the constant push to capitalize the lived territory of indigenous people; in the Sudan, the lines were drawn to secure oppositional bodies of labor.

Khedive issued a firman outlawing slavery. Long claimed “freedom is interpreted by the negro as a license to laziness.”¹²⁴ Long predicted that the government’s attempt to care for freed slaves would be a burden. “Like the Freedman’s Bureau at Washington, [“the ‘Freedman’s Bureau’ at the Saubat”] promises to be in the future a source of great expense to the Government of Egypt when it may become generally known that they are ‘emancipated.’”¹²⁵ Yet Long concluded his original narrative on a positive note: the Sudan Railway and steamship service would make Khartoum “the front door of Central Africa, the radiating point of civilization, through trade and commerce.”¹²⁶ It should be the Dongolowee, he said, not “costly foreign expeditions,” whose labor accomplishes “the regeneration of Central Africa.”¹²⁷ It was capitalism and mercenarism, then, not religion, that Long believed will serve to make Central Africa a worthwhile place.

Conclusion: The Racial Geography of US Imperialism

After he returned to the United States, Long lectured widely about Central Africa. A reporter for the *New York Times* described an 1885 lecture that Long gave in front of several hundred people at Steinway Hall in New York City. The lecture, which lasted more than two hours, incorporated stereoscopic images projected onto an “immense screen.” Harnessing the power of the image, Long’s lectures were among the first public displays of photographs of Africa. Based on these images and Long’s descriptions of his expedition, the *Times* reporter concluded that Long “penetrated into the country of

¹²⁴ Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*, 311-313.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 227.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 314.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 314-315.

savages who knew nothing of civilization or of God. They worshipped whatever tickled their fancy.” An Africa devoid of God deserved little sympathy as European nations were busy carving it up in Berlin. And besides, according to Long, violence was the only language Central Africa understood; as the reporter observed, Long “gained the respect and friendship of one of the Kings in that country by knocking him off the throne with a current of electricity.”¹²⁸ In another lecture Long underscored the relationship of capitalism and mercenarism in Africa by appearing side-by-side with Alexander Henriques, Chairman of the New York Stock Exchange. The two spoke at length about Egypt and Uganda at Chickering Hall in Boston.¹²⁹ These kinds of reports on Long’s encounter with Central Africa were typical, helping to form an image of Africa in the United States. Central Africa was a savage place, but a place that provided something the West needed.

Thirty years later, in 1915, Oric Bates, the first curator of the Department of African Ethnology and Archeology at The Peabody Museum of Harvard University, recognized Long as an important Africanist.¹³⁰ Bates wrote Long, calling him a pioneer in African exploration, a person capable of “appreciating the valuable results which ought to accrue from the science of ethnology through the pursuit of African studies.” Bates explained that he was putting together “a small collection of documents relating to the history of African studies and African exploration” and he hoped that Long would be able to contribute some of his papers, as well as a signed photograph to be hung alongside

¹²⁸ "An Illustrated Talk on Egypt," *The New York Times*, January 23, 1885.

¹²⁹ "A 'Dual Lecture' on Egypt," *The New York Times*, December 5, 1885.

¹³⁰ Bates was a prominent Africanist who authored was *The Eastern Libyans* in 1914.

other famous Africanists. In a post-script, Bates also intimated that Long might have more to give—“additional material either documentary or ethnographical.”¹³¹ There is no response to Bates among Long’s papers, which found their way into the Library of Congress.¹³² In the decade preceding Bate’s letter, however, Long felt he had been overlooked. In his attempt to remedy this concern, he went so far as to write a fourteen-page letter to President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903, which included eight enclosures. In the letter, Long complained that he had been denied a diplomatic or consular position for over twenty years due to the dishonesty of officials at the State Department. Echoing Eaton and English from the previous century, Long hoped, “I may at least be guarded through your energetic and patriotic power from further injury.”¹³³ Long feared growing old and being forgotten.

But—if we return for a moment to the analytical lens of memory— even if Long is mostly forgotten, the racial geography that he helped to establish through his mercenary work continues to do work. Long’s accounts of cannibalism survived for many years as part of the emerging fields of ethnology and anthropology. Though he called Long’s report of Azande cannibalism “little more than conjecture” in 1960, Edward Evans-Pritchard—famous for his work among the Azande—continued to believe

¹³¹ Oric Bates, *Cambridge, Oric Bates to Charles Chaillé Long, June 2, 1915*, C. Chaillé-Long Papers, 1809-1918 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress).

¹³² These papers appear to have been self-curated for many years before they arrived at the library, and are decidedly focused on Long’s own quest for recognition, rather than any serious attempt to pursue African development or ethnology. His general correspondence and other papers, composing three containers among the Library’s extensive holdings, include materials in six languages, but focus on Long’s own production of Central Africa in the United States. Long maintained a presence in libraries and archives outside the United States, as well. Among The University of Khartoum’s holdings is a copy of *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People* and well as both volumes of *My Life in Four Continents*.

¹³³ Charles Chaillé-Long, *Maltimore, Charles Chaillé-Long to Theodore Roosevelt, August 15, 1903*, C. Chaillé-Long Papers, 1809-1918 (Washington, DC: The Library of Congress).

that the Azande had once been cannibals, because “there is no smoke without fire.”¹³⁴

Apparently, Long’s conjecture was at least synonymous with smoke, if not fire.

Cannibalism was so sacred among anthropologists that many of them attacked William Arens after he concluded in *The Man-eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (1979) that accounts of Azande and other cannibalism were “evidence of nothing more than repeated plagiarism.”¹³⁵ Of Africa, Arens argued that since no African cultures condoned cannibalism at the end of the twentieth century, it was unlikely that any condoned it one-hundred years earlier. Arens reasoned that “those who believe that a few decades of ineffective European rule by a relative handful of administrators and missionaries were sufficient to eradicate what they assume was an ingrained custom know little about the continent beyond the cultural material contained in film.”¹³⁶ Based on Arens’ conclusions from more than thirty years ago—which unfortunately brush aside the wide-ranging impacts of colonialism—it might be tempting to think that the man-eating myth has come to an end. Yet representations of Central African violence and cannibalism continue to shape not just anthropology, but also US imperialism.

In 1998, Arens repeated his claim that “the ever-present cannibals on the horizon of the Western world are the results of intellectual conjuring.”¹³⁷ And indeed there has been an effort in the United States to conjure cannibals, monsters, and other figures of

¹³⁴ E. E. Evans-Pritchard, “Zande Cannibalism,” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 90, no. 2 (1960), 251.

¹³⁵ William Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology & Anthropophagy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 84. For a summary of the attacks on Arens, see Hulme, “Introduction: The Cannibal Scene,” 10-12.

¹³⁶ Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology & Anthropophagy*, 96.

¹³⁷ ———, “Rethinking Anthropophagy,” in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40.

terror in order to justify harsh methods. This has held especially true in the Sudan and Uganda. Held in deep suspicion by the White House and the State Department, Sudan loomed large in US foreign policy following a coup in 1989 and the end of the Cold War in 1992. In 1998, the United States launched cruise missiles to strike at sites in the Sudan that it claimed were chemical weapons plants. At the same time, the US struck at “terrorist camps” in Afghanistan. The common denominator was Osama bin Laden. Widely described as a monster, Bin Laden’s was expelled from the Sudan in 1994 after four years of residency, a result of outside pressure; had he not been expelled, it might have been the Sudan that the United States invaded in 2001, rather than Afghanistan. Today, the United States remains skeptical of the relationship of Sudan to both Iran and Palestine. Following a 2006 referendum, however, South Sudan become an ally. It appeared to be enough that President Salva Kiir Mayardit was a Christian and constantly wore a cowboy hat given to him by George W. Bush. Characters like Mayardit appeared to fit nicely within the mercenary order of things in Central Africa. The presence of large oil reserves in South Sudan also played no small part in Washington’s embrace of the new nation.

The United States maintains an equally fraught relationship with Uganda. Arens’ dismissal of African cannibalism came in 1979, the same year that President Idi Amin was deposed in Uganda. Throughout the 1970s, rumors of Amin’s cannibalism were widespread. In the 1981 film *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* the last word out of Amin’s

mouth before he ingests the flesh of his murdered friend is “Allah.”¹³⁸ In one monstrous act, the film linked Africa to Islam more effectively than generations of travel writers. Similarly, a BBC obituary of Amin stated quite simply that Amin, who professed to be a Christian, was accused of cannibalism, as easily as the newspaper might have suggested he was from Mars, another claim with no real evidence to back it up. Being from Central Africa was enough, however, to cast suspicion. The same holds true today.

Following Amin’s departure and exacerbated by longstanding ethnic and colonial animosities, northern Uganda suffered widespread social disorder. In 2011, US Green Berets were dispatched to Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic with relatively little fanfare to assist in a manhunt for Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), a Ugandan rebel group.¹³⁹ A few months later, Joseph Kony and the LRA became household names in the United States thanks to the work of a US missionary organization, Invisible Children.¹⁴⁰ Thereafter, the deployment of US forces enjoyed wide-spread support. One reason for this support was that “the enemy” the United States claimed to be facing off against provoked little sympathy, and in fact appeared to violate the West’s most sacred myth. Savvy observers will recognize Long’s anthropophagi in the descriptions of forced cannibalism that

¹³⁸ The film was a joint production of the Film Corporation of Kenya and Intermedia Productions, a British company.

¹³⁹ Brian Bennett and Robyn Dixon, "U.S. Sending Military Advisors to Uganda," Los Angeles Times, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/15/world/la-fg-us-uganda-20111015>.

¹⁴⁰ Though Invisible Children was not shy about displaying the maimed bodies of some of the LRA’s victims, the organization avoided making claims about cannibalism. Jason Russell, *Kony2012*, (United States: Invisible Children, Inc., 2012).

appeared in accounts attributed to survivors of the LRA's campaign of child abduction and revolutionary indoctrination.¹⁴¹

Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army posed no threat to the United States, expressed no desire to attack US interests, and the group was Christian, not Islamic. Still, the US justified the deployment as part of its broad, ongoing war against terror, provoking the Ugandan journalist Angelo Izama and other skeptical commentators to claim that the deployment of US forces to track down Joseph Kony was a self-serving move to secure the oil reserves that were discovered in Uganda a few years before.¹⁴² But Uganda was not an isolated outpost in the War on Terror, nor was 2011 the first time US forces had operated out of the country. Since 2006, the United States had used Uganda as a forward operating base in its covert actions against Al Shabaab in Somalia following the collapse of the Islamic Courts Union.¹⁴³ The United States provided support for the mission, but the war was fought largely using African soldiers and mercenaries.¹⁴⁴

US securitization of the continent—the ongoing obsession with Somalia, which can be traced back to the end of the Cold War, and the hunt for Joseph Kony, which takes

¹⁴¹ The most extended treatment of anthropophagism among the LRA is Paul Raffaele's *Among the Cannibals: Adventures on the Trail of Man's Darkest Ritual*. The book recounts Raffaele's "quest" to locate contemporary cannibals. In the chapter devoted to the LRA, it is clear that Raffaele already knows what he will find in Africa, even before he arrives in Uganda: "Africa! Cannibals! This present journey was always inevitable; those two powerfully emotive words seem linked in the Western mind like pork and apple sauce." Raffaele who has a close connection to the Smithsonian, never witnesses the butchering of a human body or anyone cooking or eating another person. He simply relies on second-hand accounts and admissions, concluding "Why would they lie?" Paul Raffaele, *Among the Cannibals: Adventures on the Trail of Man's Darkest Ritual* (New York: Smithsonian Books, HarperCollins, 2008), 176-78, 255.

¹⁴² Ryan Deveraux, "Kony 2012: US State Department – We Have No Intention of Leaving Uganda," *The Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/us-news-blog/2012/mar/09/kony-2012-state-department-uganda>.

¹⁴³ Nick Young, "Uganda: A Pawn in the US's Proxy African War on Terror," *The Guardian*, September 25, 2010.

¹⁴⁴ Jeffrey Gettleman, Mark Mazzetti, and Eric Schmitt, "U.S. Relies on Contractors in Somalia Conflict," *The New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/11/world/africa/11somalia.html?_r=2&.

place in the shadow of the War on Terror and the increasing influence of China in Africa and elsewhere—is now being organized out by AFRICOM, the US military command that assumed responsibility for military operations carried out in Africa, excepting Egypt, beginning in 2008.¹⁴⁵ In outlining the twenty-first century US mission in Africa, policy makers and military planners were quick to note that the success of AFRICOM would depend on establishing legitimacy with local governments. In a report submitted to the U.S. Army War College, Dr. Diana Putman of USAID, argued that “to win” in Africa, AFRICOM leaders must recognize the, “deepening political maturity” of African leaders, and convince these leaders that they share vital interests with the United States.¹⁴⁶ These efforts, to build close relationships with African leaders in order to secure Africa, are eerily similar to the methods embraced by Chaillé-Long in *Central Africa*. But as Faraj Abdallah Tamim and Malinda Smith have shown, security for the United States and African leaders does not necessarily mean security for Africans in general.¹⁴⁷ As I have demonstrated in the chapter, the racialized landscape that Long helped to establish—as well as his methods for managing this landscape—has helped to make Africa a natural site for the application of force to what are essentially humanitarian problems.

¹⁴⁵ The creation of AFRICOM consolidated territory once overseen piecemeal by CENTCOM, the United States Central Command, and EUCOM, the United States European Command.

¹⁴⁶ Diana B. Putman, "Combating African Questions About the Legitimacy of Africom," in (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2008), 1, 8.

¹⁴⁷ Faraj Abdallah Tamim and Malinda Smith Smith, "Human Rights and Insecurities: Muslims in Post-9/11 East Africa," in *Securing Africa: Post-9/11 Discourses on Terrorism*, ed. Malinda S. Smith (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010).

4. THE AMERICAN MISSION AND MERCENARY DIPLOMACY ON THE NILE, 1869-1883

I am well aware that this country is too far away and that our interests here are too small to give the same importance in the United States to the details of what is transpiring as is given to them in Europe.

Elbert Farman, 1879¹

The American name indeed in the Nile Valley is hallowed by time.

Charles Chaillé-Long, 1912²

In 1876, three years before he complained that the United States neglected Egypt, US Consul-General Elbert Farman asked Secretary of State Hamilton Fish to send a cypher to Cairo so that he could encrypt his diplomatic dispatches to the United States. After spending just seven months in Egypt, Farman recognized the seriousness of events in the country and was concerned about sending unencrypted diplomatic correspondence over European-operated lines.³ Nominally a territory of the Ottoman Empire, but greatly under the influence of—and in debt to—Britain and France, Egypt was at a crossroads. Suffering due to a widely-felt debt crisis, native-born officers and soldiers joined in a nationalist movement that threatened the management of the country's foreign debt. The British reacted by invading the country and establishing a colonial administration. In the United States, the occupation of Egypt by the British was understood, in part, through the lens of mercenary diplomacy. During the 1870s, about fifty US soldiers had worked for the Egyptian government helping to modernize the Egyptian army. After they returned

¹ Elbert E. Farman, *Cairo, November 15, 1876*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Cairo, Egypt, 1864-1906 (College Park, MD: National Archives II), 24 April 1879.

² Chaillé-Long, "The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt," 1.

³ Farman, *Cairo, November 15, 1876*.

home, these mercenaries spoke out about their experience and against British imperialism. The intimate nature of these mercenary narratives helped make it possible for the African explorer Chaillé-Long to claim over thirty years later that the American name was hallowed along the Nile.

So far I have charted the productive outcomes of three US mercenary encounters with the nineteenth-century Ottoman world: 1) cultural and historical memory of the 1801-05 War with Tripoli and the Battle of Derna, invoked throughout US history to prepare Americans for wars in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere; 2) personal and national sovereignty between 1815-28, an important period in the development of US social and political culture; and 3) the racialized geography of Central Africa following the end of the US Civil War, an imaginative landscape that exercises much power over contemporary discourse about Africa. This chapter charts the outcome of a fourth US mercenary encounter with the Ottoman world: the mercenary diplomacy performed by the members of the 1870s American mission to Egypt. In 1912, Chaillé-Long used this phrase—the American mission—to describe the contingent of about fifty Union and Confederate officers who went to work as mercenaries for the Egyptian government. While few commentators besides Long have seemed willing to grant them any kind of legitimacy—which is what makes them mercenaries—the members of American mission had strong ties to elites in the United States and they maintained close relationships with important figures in the US government and military throughout their lives; some officers were even excused from active duty military service in the United States to serve in Egypt. Far from living as isolated soldiers of fortune in Cairo and elsewhere, these

mercenaries circulated among a wide range of people who lived, worked in, and visited Egypt. While historical accounts of the decade-long American mission to Egypt tend to focus on military matters—including the Civil War experience of the various officers whom the Egyptians employed, professionalization of the Egyptian army, exploratory expeditions, the war with Abyssinia, and the nationalist movement of 'Urabi Pasha⁴—there remains to be told a rich narrative of the ways in which the American mission played an important role in domesticating Egypt for audiences in the United States.⁵

I argue that in their efforts to communicate the meaning of their encounter with Ottoman Egypt to audiences back home, the members of the American mission produced a collection of texts that simultaneously embraced an exceptional national narrative of the United States following the end of the Civil War, criticized European nations for their role in imperialism, and embraced a fantasy Egypt—imagined as an ideal, modern partner. Contrary to, and sometimes complicit with, a body of knowledge being produced and widely disseminated about ancient Egypt in the United States, these mercenary narratives sought to impress upon their audiences the modernization of the Egyptian state, first militarily under Mehmed Ali, and second imperially under Isma'il Pasha. Yet the modernization of Egypt was not the only subject addressed in these texts. Besides the exceptionalism and anti-imperialism that threads through these texts, there is also a deep concern with forms, practices, and management of gender in both Egypt and the United

⁴ For example, Crabitès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army*. Hesselstine and Wolf, *The Blue and the Gray on the Nile*. John Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁵ This domestication, in many ways, mirrors the formations that Timothy Mitchell describes in *Colonising Egypt* (1988). Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge Middle East Library (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

States. The American mission's collective desire to somehow wed Egypt to the United States was an ongoing theme of their writing when they returned to the United States. The second byproduct of the American mission, beyond its domestication of Egypt, was its militarization of US-Egyptian relations. Just as Long had imagined Central Africa as a heavily-policed space in which African ethnic groups were played off against one another, so too was Egypt imagined as a strategic bulwark against the expansion of European power into Africa and the Middle East; Egypt was America's solution to weak Ottoman rule. The United States, already a world power, had much to gain from a version of Egyptian modernity in which the army—trained by the United States—was the central force in this vital region. When this dream failed to reach fruition, the American mission's disappointment was palpable.

This chapter begins with an explanation of the meaning of mercenary diplomacy. I proceed with a brief outline of the history of the American mission. At the center of this mission was Charles Pomeroy Stone, a former Union general who lived and worked in Egypt for over twelve years. I contrast Stone's measured output following his return to the United States—he never published a full-length account of his experience—with descriptions of Egyptian service written by other members of the American mission. Stone's publications, all written after the occupation of Egypt, attempt to reconcile Egypt and the United States on the level of the domestic. The publication of his daughter Fanny's "Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882" in *The Century* magazine in 1884 marks an important moment in Stone's reintegration into the United States. Fanny's diary also works as an important statement of the gendered logic of the

American mission. Finally, I conclude by examining the career of Elbert Farman, the US Consul-General who devoted significant attention to events in Egypt during the years of the American mission and again at the beginning of the twentieth century. Farman also falls prey to the gendered logic of US exceptionalism, as he devotes four chapters of a book meant to be about modern Egypt to describing his role in the acquisition of “Cleopatra’s Needle,” an ancient obelisk, for the United States in 1879. These popular and widely-read texts—each a product of the mercenary world of the American mission—were vital in the formation of US attitudes toward Egypt.

Mercenary Diplomacy

Infrequently, the term mercenary diplomacy has been used to refer to the practice of arming or supporting a foreign force in a particular country or region without acknowledging them as an ally.⁶ In this sense, the members of the American mission qualify as mercenary diplomats, given the tacit acknowledgement and support given to their activities by significant political and military figures in the United States. But while political and cultural diplomacy are widely held to be some of the most important practices in the negotiation of relationships between modern nation states, mercenary diplomacy is considered illegitimate—mercenaries, after all, are bad apples. Political and cultural diplomats are *appointed* or *asked* by top government officials and they perform a ceremonial and public role in their assignments abroad. Mercenaries are *hired* and their

⁶For example, in the US Civil War John L. Swift, *About Grant* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1880), 12. In the war between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire, Linda Gordon, *Cossack Rebellions: Social Turmoil in the Sixteenth-Century Ukraine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 153-162. And in the War on Terror, M.G. Chitkara, *Combating Terrorism* (New Delhi: S. B. Nangia, APH Publishing Corporation, 2005), 344.

work is often obscured, for reasons I have detailed throughout. But as the previous chapters demonstrate, mercenaries often play important roles in the construction, maintenance, and imagination of the United States and what it means to be an American in the Ottoman world. Another element of mercenary diplomacy that is often overlooked is the same element that is often overlooked when speaking of both political and cultural diplomacy: the return home. Neither mercenary nor political nor cultural diplomacy is strictly outward directed. Diplomats of all stripes tend to return to the United States, and often speak out about their work and desires for future relations with the countries in which they served. Discussions of diplomacy often fail to account for the ways in which diplomatic narratives reconstruct the encounter for audiences in their home country. In the United States, political diplomats frequently influence foreign policy debates, and cultural diplomats contribute to popular understanding of the world beyond the imagined borders of the United States. Mercenary diplomats do similar work. Certainly, though, none of the three forms of diplomacy that I discuss here—political, cultural, and mercenary—are as unrelated as they are often made out to be; diplomats in general have intimate relations with one another, working together to organize knowledge of distant places and channel that knowledge into everything from economic policy to popular culture. And indeed throughout this chapter, I rely on evidence that might seem at first to not fall cleanly within the bounds of mercenary labor or work, but for each piece of evidence I examine, I argue for a strong connection between the multiple forms of diplomacy.

THE ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN MISSION TO EGYPT

The arrival of US mercenaries in Alexandria in the 1870 was intimately related to cotton, slavery, and the Civil War. In *River of Darkness: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (2013), Walter Johnson tells part of this tripartite story from the perspective of capitalist development in the Lower South of the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century. But Johnson's book ends abruptly. In one paragraph, the United States defeats the Confederate States of America and “the reconstruction of the history of the Civil War as a national story” begins.⁷ But what happened next? Did the political economy of cotton simply vanish? And how is this all related to Egypt? To answer these questions and finish the story that Johnson begins, we must briefly return to the beginning of the war—before US mercenaries arrived in Alexandria—and to the transformation of the global landscape of cotton production.

Johnson is not the first to connect US cotton and the Civil War to events outside the borders of the United States. In 1916, the American historian James Scherer built on the work of Charles Adams in order to place US cotton production and the Civil War within a global context.⁸ By 1918, however, W. H. Himbury, a manager with the British Cotton Growing Association, could still observe that “few people have ever thought of cotton as a world power.” Citing Scherer’s *Cotton as a World Power*, Himbury argued that Egypt’s importance to Great Britain after 1861 increased in the face of shortages caused by, first, the US Civil War, and, then, increased demand in the United States after

⁷ Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*.

⁸ James A. B. Scherer, *Cotton as a World Power: A Study in the Economic Interpretation of History* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1916), 261-269.

the war. British Imperialism in Egypt was, in part, the British Empire's response to the perception that a cotton famine existed in the United Kingdom during the war as well as the threat of rising US consumption after 1865.⁹ British imperialism in Egypt, then, was one result of the US Civil War. Himbury was a proponent of empire, stating "Mr. Chamberlain once asked the British people 'to think Imperially,' but the Council of the B.C.G.A. have gone one better and 'acted imperially'; in fact, they are the only body who have made a practical attempt to develop the Empire's huge resources."¹⁰ By the time Himbury wrote, the Sudan, in particular, was looked upon as a valuable site for cotton production. He described fantasy Sudan as the center of Great Britain's new cotton kingdom, cooing that "the population, however, is small, but with a Government appreciated by the people, and consequent settled conditions, time will remedy this difficulty, as natives from other parts of Africa will be attracted, and with the absence of slavery and war, quickly multiply."¹¹ Himbury went on to explain that cotton production in the Sudan had been initiated by Kitchener. He even described failures as successes, as these showed not only where cotton could be grown, but also where it could not be grown.¹² He concluded that "generally speaking, we [the British] are creating a new trade, and enabling the natives to produce a product for export in the centre of Africa on a

⁹ W. H. Himbury, "Empire Cotton," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 17, no. No. 68 (1918), 262.

¹⁰ Ibid., 275.

¹¹ Ibid., 269-270.

¹² Ibid., 270-271.

new basis, without being exploited.”¹³ Such was the arc of Himbury’s progressive narrative.

Less than ten years later, American Edward Earle would describe this arc of events differently: the cotton famine helped to transform Egypt from a self-sufficient country, to one dependent on import products. Because of the quality of its cotton, prevailing labor conditions, and the lack of a native cotton industry (Egyptian linen production centered on flax), Egypt was better suited than India to help replace the cotton from the Southern states and these advantages became Egypt’s undoing.¹⁴ Though he disagreed with Himbury about the impact of British imperialism on Egypt and the Sudan, Earle agreed that the “cotton famine”—a result of the US Civil War—played a central role in Britain’s decision to bombard, invade, and occupy Egypt in 1882.¹⁵ As Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts pointed out in 1995, “whether the famine was a supply crisis, a cyclical business crisis, or some combination of the two, the cotton famine of 1861-1865 was one of the industrial world’s first raw material crises.” Prices rose, mills closed, and unemployment among factory workers skyrocketed. Isaacman and Roberts describe the significance of the cotton famine for Africa: “the late nineteenth-century

¹³ Ibid., 275. For more on cotton in the Sudan in the first half the twentieth century, see Victoria Bernal, “Cotton and Colonial Order in Sudan: A Social History with Emphasis on the Gezira Scheme,” in *Cotton, Colonialism, and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts (Portsmouth, NH: Heinmann, 1995).

¹⁴ Edward Mead Earle, “Egyptian Cotton and the American Civil War,” *Political Science Quarterly* 41, no. No. 4 (1926), 533.

¹⁵ Ibid., 545.

development of European interest groups promoting cotton cultivation in Africa forms a central part of the story of European imperialism and African colonization.”¹⁶

In 2004, Sven Beckert pointed out that the Civil War “brought to a climax the tensions within global capitalism.”¹⁷ When, after 1860, US cotton exports dropped and fears of a cotton famine began to gain steam, British capital flows increased to India, Brazil, and Egypt—or at least into the pockets of confidence men and others with even a vague connection to these places. Beckert argues that, supported by infusions of European capital, cotton producers “invented in those years a new system of mobilizing non-slave labor, characterized by cultivators enmeshed in debt, share croppers burdened by crop liens, and rural producers with little political power.”¹⁸ This system of production and labor indebtedness would spread to the United States after the end of the war. In Egypt, where cotton had been grown for some time, production increased from 50.1 to 250.7 million pounds over the course of the US Civil War. Although cotton production fell to 125 million pounds after the end of the war, by 1872 exports from Alexandria to Europe amounted to 200 million pounds.¹⁹ Beckert notes, “the new empire of cotton production demanded new forms of state intervention, both in order to expand its scope as well as to secure its new ways of extracting labor.”²⁰ Ultimately state intervention meant that “the systems of mutual dependence and personal domination that had

¹⁶ Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts, eds., *Cotton, Colonialism, and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Portsmouth, HH: Heinemann, 1995), 7-8.

¹⁷ Sven Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War,” *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 5 (2004), 1406.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1415, 1422.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1422.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1428.

characterized the countryside of Berar, Egypt, the American South, and elsewhere before the Civil War gave way to a world in which creditors backed by the state coerced cultivators to cultivate agricultural commodities for world markets.”²¹ One of the top priorities of this new economic order was the enclosure of capital nation-states. In Egypt’s case, Britain moved to not only enclose, but also to secure and manage Egypt as both a resource and as a strategic outpost of its global empire. Given the stakes of Egyptian cotton production, it should be no surprise to find US mercenaries on the streets of Cairo during this period. In 1805, mercenaries were an integral component of US efforts to ensure free passage for its commercial vessels in the Mediterranean, and in 1826, George Bethune English was in the Mediterranean to ensure that the Ottomans recognized US sovereignty on the same footing with European powers. In the 1870s, US mercenaries arrived once again in Alexandria, this time to participate in the economic development of the country and its resources. Egypt’s cotton production during the US Civil War and its aftermath was one act in the global economic movement of capital that once again prompted US mercenarism in the Ottoman world.

When they first arrived in Egypt, the British occupation was more than a decade away, and the members of the American mission praised the modernization that had followed the development of the cotton economy in the 1860s. But what exactly did the Americans mean when they described modernization? Judging from their extended descriptions of the country, what they appear to have meant was militarization and an imperial logic of expanding territory and technology. For as the Egyptian economy grew,

²¹ Ibid., 1433.

so too grew the Egyptian army—from 20,000 strong in 1865 to 90,000 by 1875. By 1876, the army accounted for 10% of the Egyptian national budget.²² In order to be modern, these soldiers needed rifles. In 1860, Egypt had 80,000 rifled muskets, and a nascent firearms industry that even offered to sell 47,000 rifles to the United States during the Civil War.²³ By 1870, however, the balance of trade had shifted. Now it was Egypt buying rifles from the United States. In 1867, Şahin Pasha, the Egyptian Minister of War, met Remington salesman Samuel Norris at the Paris International Exposition where E. Remington & Sons won a Silver Medal for firearms; Egypt subsequently ordered 60,000 rifles from the company in 1869.²⁴

Soldiers and rifles were two of the key elements of Egyptian modernity as it filtered through the lens of the American mission. The third element of an Egyptian modernity was the ability to successfully use those soldiers and rifles to produce a profitable outcome: strategy and tactics, in short. To fulfill this third requirement, Khedive Isma'il Pasha, the Ottoman-backed ruler of Egypt, recruited military officers from the United States, many of whom had fought in the US Civil War, a conflict that is itself often seen as a preeminent marker of modernity. Starting in 1869, at the direction of Isma'il, Thaddeus Mott of New York recruited former Union and Confederate officers to work in the General Staff of the Egyptian army in order to support Egypt's planned expansion south into Africa. Mott already had strong ties to the Ottoman world—his

²² Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 32.

²³ Seward was unable to purchase the rifles, but after inspecting eleven of the prototypes thought enough of the workmanship to ask for assurances of the Egyptians that they would not sell the arms to the Confederates. Ibid., 22.

²⁴ Ibid.

father once performed surgery on Sultan Mahmud II, his sister was married to the Ottoman ambassador to the United States, and he worked as a mercenary for several years in the Turkish army before accepting Isma'il's request to serve as his recruiter in the United States.²⁵ In the United States, Mott contacted General William Sherman, then Commanding General of the United States Army, who recommended a number of former and a few current officers. Historians William Hesselstine and Hazel Wolf describe these Americans mercenaries who worked in Egypt between 1869 and 1882 as "something more than the traditional and romantic soldiers of fortune who appear on the battlefields of the world," yet they were "something less than a military mission loaned by one state to another." Hesselstine and Wolf do observe that Sherman went "beyond the bounds of strict propriety" in recruiting. But they claim a House of Representatives inquiry at the time concluded that there no problem with the service of the Americans in Egypt.²⁶ For the two historians, the conclusions of the congressional inquiry are enough to erase the bonds between citizen and state.

While historians have been unwilling to grant any legitimacy to the American mission, its members took their Egyptian service seriously. In "The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt," an unpublished short manuscript which formed the basis for his autobiography, *My Life in Four Continents* (1912), Chaillé-Long summed up his and his

²⁵ ———, "An American Fracas in Egypt: The Butler Affair of 1872," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 42 (2005), 154.

²⁶ The problem is that they provide no source for the claim and I have been unable to locate the relevant archival documents to examine more closely. The recruitment story that Hesselstine and Wolf tell provides the standard outline for many later accounts. Hesselstine and Wolf, *The Blue and the Gray on the Nile*, 22. Clarence C. Clendenen, Robert O. Collins, and Peter Duignan, *Americans in Africa, 1865-1900*, Hoover Institution Studies, (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University, 1966), 74-82.

countrymen's accomplishments in Ottoman Egypt, concluding, "the American Mission to Egypt added prestige and honor to the American name in Egypt and Africa." Yet Long worried that "the Mission had no historian and its achievements have been methodically ignored by the writers of the history of Modern Egypt and Africa," calling this absence from official histories "a gap which should be filled."²⁷ Long went so far as to claim that the accomplishments of the American mission were talked about in the cafés of the North African Coast alongside the exploits of veterans of the War with Tripoli like Samuel Barron and Stephen Decatur, demonstrating a deep desire for recognition of US exceptionalism. Long recalled his comrades, "all of whom are dead save four. Five repose beneath the sands of Egypt and Africa," where "no tablet or stone mark their forgotten graves."²⁸ Finally, he responded to critics who questioned the relationship of the American mission to the United States, claiming that

ten of the officers subsequently sent on General Sherman's special recommendation were officers of the United States army and detached on one year's leave of absence for the purpose of entering the Egyptian army. This fact of itself lends to the mission an official status which any other but the Government at Washington, at that time, would have been eager to acknowledge.²⁹

Were Long and others able to speak from beyond the grave, they would surely object to historians' characterization of them as "something less" than legitimate state actors. What these mercenaries would say matters because the absences and gaps produced by placing mercenaries outside the mainstream of US history continue to fuel the fire of US exceptionalism, an important component of US imperialism.

²⁷ Chaillé-Long, "The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt," 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

CHIEF OF THE MERCENARIES

In *My Life in Four Continents* Chaillé-Long recalled his arrival in Egypt and the warning he received about the dangers of working as a mercenary. Long writes that after he described the elaborate reception he received from Isma'il to former Confederate Generals William Loring and Henry Sibley, Hakkekyan Bey—whom Long characterized as “a distinguished Armenian, long resident in Egypt, a graduate of Oxford, engineer by profession but scholar and orientalist by practice”—replied by reciting Plutarch’s account of the life of Agesilaus II. Once the King of Sparta, Agesilaus accepted employment in Egypt only to be appointed Chief of the Mercenaries, a humiliating post. Hakkekyan warned Long and the others to be sure “that the Egyptian Ismail does not treat you as the Egyptian Tachos treated the Spartan Agesilaus.”³⁰ However, it was not Long, but Charles Pomeroy Stone, who would, in fact, become chief of mercenaries. Far from humiliating Stone, serving as chief of the mercenaries restored his reputation after a disappointing career during the Civil War.

Born in Massachusetts in 1824 and a graduate of and instructor at West Point, Stone was described by a biographer as “descended from a Puritan line of ancestors who had taken part in every war in which the American people had been engaged.”³¹ Stone served as a lieutenant in the Mexican American War and then worked as an engineer and surveyor in Lower California and Sonora for the Mexican government. In 1860 he returned to Washington, DC where he published *Notes on the State of Sonora*. He

³⁰ ———, *My Life in Four Continents*, 27, 34.

³¹ George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. From Its Establishment, in 1802, to 1890*, 3rd. vol. II (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), 1237.

subsequently enlisted as a colonel in the Union Army and organized the defense of Washington, DC. Five months later he was a brigadier general and active in important campaigns.³² Stone, however, was no abolitionist and ordered escaped slaves in Maryland returned to their owners. This stance caused him to become embroiled in a dispute with Governor John Andrew and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts.³³

By October, Stone was serving under Major General George B. McClellan. At the Battle of Ball's Bluff in October 1861, sitting US Senator Edward D. Baker, who was acting as a colonel under Stone, made a series of tactical errors while leading a regiment and was killed. In the immediate aftermath of the defeat, both Stone and McClellan blamed Baker for the defeat. Yet the hearings that followed resulted in Stone's arrest, at the request of the Secretary of War Henry Stanton and maybe even the President. Stone was held without charges for almost two months at Fort Lafayette, where Confederate prisoners were held, and then for five more months at Fort Hamilton. Finally, Stone was released thanks to a new law requiring officers charged with crimes be tried within thirty days of their arrest. McClellan and Joseph Hooker both immediately requested Stone's service—he was still a general in the Union Army since no charges or court martial had been pursued. Both requests were declined by the Secretary of War. It was not until 1863 that Stone was finally able to hear the testimony against him and answer it, officially clearing his name. He subsequently served in the Siege of Port Hudson, the Red River Campaign, and then—after being demoted to colonel by the Secretary of War—in the

³² Ibid.

³³ Bruce Catton, *Bruce Catton's Civil War: Three Volumes in One* (New York: Fairfax Press, 1984). H. Donald Winkler, *Civil War Goats and Scapegoats* (Nashville, TN: Cumberland House, 2008), 47-50.

Siege of Petersburg. He resigned before the war ended, convinced that he would never be treated fairly by Stanton.³⁴ After the war, Stone worked as an engineer in Virginia before he was recommended to Mott for Egyptian service by Sherman. In Egypt, Stone quickly became Chief of the General Staff of the Egyptian army.³⁵

Organized around French principles, the *État Major* was composed of a staff college supported by an arms museum, a library, two military journals in Arabic, and a collection of maps. Although the General Staff appeared to be well-organized and funded, it only served to exacerbate the existing division between officers of the staff—mostly non Egyptians—and officers of the line.³⁶ The core of the General Staff was the mercenary members of the American mission, though officers of many nationalities served in the General Staff as well. In “An American Fracas in Egypt” (2005), John Dunn provides an outline of the early years of the American mission, demonstrating the ways in which Mott and US Consul-General George Butler sought to profit personally from the American mission to Egypt by organizing the import of Winchester firearms and U.S. brand cartridges from the United States.³⁷ A power struggle developed between Mott and Stone for control of the American mission—Mott was usually absent from Egypt and not a member of the General Staff; Stone was supported by Şahin Pasha, who had organized

³⁴ ———, *Civil War Goats and Scapegoats*, 47-56.

³⁵ Charles Hale, "January 27," in, ed. RG 59 RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, EGYPT 1835-1873 DESPATCHES FROM U.S. CONSULS IN ALEXANDRIA, and 1868 – May 28 T45 January 31, 1870, ROLL 5 (National Archives II, 1870). ———, "July 7," in, ed. RG 59 RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, EGYPT 1835-1873 DESPATCHES FROM U.S. CONSULS IN ALEXANDRIA, and 1868 – May 28 T45 January 31, 1870, ROLL 5 (National Archives II, 1870).

³⁶ Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 48-49. The General Staff, composed of many Americans, was also involved with the Khedival Geographic Society, which was formed in 1875.

³⁷ ———, "An American Fracas in Egypt: The Butler Affair of 1872," 156.

the Remington contract, and Mott was supported by Butler. As the conflict escalated, Butler wrote to Secretary of State Fish in the United States:

Charles P. Stone is the Brigadier General Stone who lost the Battle of Balls Bluff and was imprisoned for a long period of time in a charge of treason. He is now an avowed enemy of the United States and American interests in Egypt and has used his influence to degrade or remove American officers to make room for Russians, Danes, and French³⁸

The situation continued to escalate and one month later, in July 1872 at the Hotel d'Europe, Butler—a vocal anti-Confederate—and two partners got into a gunfight with three former Confederates officers who were in Egypt working for the Khedive.³⁹ The incident proved embarrassing, with the *New York Times* describing it as “disgraceful affray.”⁴⁰ Dunn concludes that “the ‘Butler Affair’ aided Stone in his efforts to gain mastery of the foreign mercenaries, but it also revealed the extreme lack of unity among these men. While several made names as explorers, or published interesting memoirs, their primary goal of serving as military advisors, was always impaired by this division.” Elsewhere, Dunn describes the American mission as “fractionalized and insubordinate.”⁴¹ On closer inspection, however, it is unclear what disunity and division Dunn is talking about.

After Butler’s departure—he was dismissed by the President—the American mission was fundamentally American, rather than divided between former Confederate

³⁸ George Butler, *Alexandria, June, 23, 1872*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Alexandria, Egypt, 1835-1873 (College Park, MD: National Archives II).

³⁹ Dunn, “‘An American Fracas in Egypt’: The Butler Affair of 1872,” 155-161. Butler’s uncle owned U.S. Cartridge Company. The “fracas” is addressed from Butler’s perspective in Butler, *Alexandria, July 14, 1872*.

⁴⁰ “Trouble between the United States Consul-General and Ex-Confederate Officers,” *The New York Times*, July 14, 1872.

⁴¹ Dunn, “‘An American Fracas in Egypt’: The Butler Affair of 1872,” 161. ———, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 4.

and Union officers. Following the shootout between the diplomatic and mercenary factions, there were no further incidents and mercenary and political diplomats often dined and came together to receive visiting Americans. While they may have had their disagreements, their own accounts suggest unity more than discord. Nearly all the accounts of their work in Egypt agree. Raleigh Colston, a former Confederate general, recalled that “those who had worn the blue and the gray were about equal in number, and never, so far as I know, was there the least unpleasant feeling between us on account of our late struggle. Away from home, we felt that we were all Americans, and were proud to be so.⁴² Regional identities were not necessarily shed in this process. Though he developed close relations with Long and Stone, both Union veterans, William Loring’s choice of a title for his 1880 book—*A Confederate Soldier in Egypt*— suggests that identifying as an American did not mean that one could not also identify as a Southerner, or even as a Confederate.⁴³ In this regard, Egypt functioned as an example of what Nina Silber calls a site of reunion.⁴⁴ In the years following the end of the Civil War, there was a social and cultural push to reconcile the former adversaries of the war. This movement, which was deeply invested in gender and manhood, peaked in the United States in the 1880s. But in the 1870s, in Egypt, the reunion was already well underway among some of the country’s most experienced soldiers. The American mission to Egypt, then, must be remembered as an important site of national reconciliation abroad as well as a site of knowledge and power production at a vital moment in the nation’s history.

⁴² Colston, “Modern Egypt and Its People,” 150.

⁴³ William Wing Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt* (New York,: Dodd, 1884).

⁴⁴ Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 60.

The members of the American mission were unified by their status as citizens of the United States as well as their intimacy with organs and individuals of government in the United States. Former Secretary of State William Henry Seward visited in 1869 along with General Nathaniel Banks. William Sherman visited in 1872; George B. McClellan visited in 1874, and Ulysses Grant visited at the beginning of 1878 and passed through Egypt once more on his return trip to the United States from India. At Cairo, Grant was met by both a political and a mercenary diplomat, who were accompanied by the Khedive's representative.⁴⁵ Along with politicians, the Americans received cultural figures, as well. At the end of 1872, for example, Ralph Waldo Emerson arrived in Egypt. Meanwhile, the Egyptian government also continued its relationships with US companies. In the United States, Remington procured loans to enlarge their production facility to fulfill Egypt's 1869 order of 60,000 rifles. Ten thousand rifles were delivered, but the balance was canceled and diverted to France. In 1874, Egypt ordered 55,000 more rifles, and by 1880 Remington had shipped a total of 250,000 rifles to Egypt.⁴⁶ At some point, Remington was gifted a Cairo block, where he built a house that became the company's regional sales headquarters as well as part of the winter social scene for members of the American mission.⁴⁷ By 1877, in the midst of its debt crisis, Egypt owed Remington \$1 million. In his capacity as Consul General, Elbert Farman ultimately negotiated a settlement in which Egypt paid Remington 66% of the balance due. In their

⁴⁵ Elbert E. Farman, *Along the Nile with General Grant* (New York: The Grafton Press, 1904), 26. General Stone and his wife accompanied the former President and the Consul General on a tour of the Pyramids and the Sphinx. 38.

⁴⁶ Roy Marcot, *The History of Remington Firearms: The History of One of the World's Most Famous Gun Makers*, 1st Lyons Press edition. (Guilford, CT Lyons Press, 2005), 50-51.

⁴⁷ Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 66.

official company history, Remington claims that the company never recovered from the losses it incurred—it is unclear, however, what the successful firearms maker means by this.⁴⁸

What were all these rifles for? As demonstrated in the last chapter, many of them were used to help establish tighter control over the Sudan and the Equatorial provinces under Baker and then Gordon and Chaillé-Long. Many more of the rifles Egypt purchased were meant to help the Khedive expand eastward—or at least clarify Egypt's Red Sea borders. While Egypt maintained at least some control over the Sudan until 1885, this eastward expansion into Abyssinia was a total failure.⁴⁹ In two battles at Gura, the Egyptians suffered terrible losses. In these engagements, the army was led by Minister of War Rateb Pasha with William Loring serving as Chief of Staff with no executive power, merely an advisory role.⁵⁰ Even before the losses at Gura, the expedition had an ugly tone to it. When the Egyptians captured Colonel John Kirkham, a British mercenary working for Abyssinia, they treated him as a prisoner of war; meanwhile, the Americans wanted him tried as a spy—an accusation with much more serious consequences. In 1927, Arthur Robinson claimed—probably correctly—that the Americans were abusive and showed contempt for the Egyptian officers. In one widely cited example, William McEntyre Dye struck a fellow Egyptian officer. At Gura on November 6, 1874, 13,000

⁴⁸ Marcot, *The History of Remington Firearms: The History of One of the World's Most Famous Gun Makers*, 50-51. According to a communication from Farman (10 May 1878), Remington came to Cairo hoping to help collect his \$1 million, drew a sword in an Egyptian's office, and was sent home by Stone.

⁴⁹ Chaillé-Long's brief trip around the Horn of Africa, about which he promised much but wrote little, was a prelude to Egypt's move against Abyssinia.

⁵⁰ Among the other officers on this expedition was Ahmed 'Urabi, working as a transport and commissary officer. 'Urabi was removed from duty.

Egyptians were surrounded by 60,000 Abyssinians with rifles the Egyptians did not expect them to have. Of the tactical errors that put them at such a disadvantage, Robinson says, “the accounts of the American officers are silent on the point; but it is said that Rateb Pasha allowed his views to be overruled by Loring Pasha.” Colston chose to place the blame for the debacle squarely on a lack of motivation among the rank and file—“what is the Khedive to the Egyptian soldier but a Turkish oppressor, who takes his last piastre for taxes and forces him into the army against his inclination and prejudices.”⁵¹ Most writers have followed Robinson, though, placing the blame for the loss on Loring.⁵² Whether Loring really is to blame or Robinson’s claim is merely colonial mudslinging is unclear, but whatever the case the Egyptians suffered a severe defeat in the field and then additional losses during a siege on March 8-10, 1875. Even after the French helped to negotiate a ceasefire, raiding continued for months as the Egyptians withdrew to the coast. As a grim conclusion to the campaign, Kirkham was found drowned in the harbor at Massawa under suspicious circumstances.⁵³

Writing about the Abyssinian war in 1959, Czeslaw Jesman concluded that after the end of hostilities “the Americans lingered on through the hottest months on the Red Sea [at Massawa] and then proceeded to Cairo to endure endless frustrations and humiliations for almost two years. Thus ended for them one of the more incredible episodes of Khedive Isma’il’s imperialist policy--the employment of a large number of

⁵¹ Colston, “Modern Egypt and Its People,” 145.

⁵² Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 142.

⁵³ Arthur E. Robinson, “The Egyptian-Abyssinian War of 1874-1876,” *Journal of the Royal African Society* Vol. 26, No. 103 (1927). Robinson also claimed—perhaps still suspicious of Britain’s World War I ally—that the US mercenaries were paid directly through the office of the US Consul. He also says that the Ethiopians had purchased rifles from the French at Djibouti in exchange for ivory. *Ibid.*, 268, 271.

American military in his service.”⁵⁴ Dunn attributes the Egyptian loss to Isma’il’s failure to realize that mercenaries should never occupy command positions. “Men like Stone, or Gordon, often had agendas that fitted their personal needs for glory or justice, and then formed these into strategies that supposedly served Egypt.” Dunn concludes, “whether American, Circassian, or Armenian, these Neo-Mamluks often provided bad advice that took Egyptian forces far from home, into imperial ventures that, even if crowned with victory, would hardly have returned any profits.”⁵⁵ The American mission was limited in its success, certainly, by its own ambitions, but also by the ongoing influence of the Ottomans, the British and the French in Egypt. During the early years of his rule, Isma’il followed the example of his predecessor Sa’id and continued to spend lavishly on public works and other projects. But by 1870, US cotton production had recovered and surpassed the rest of the world. Prices dropped and by 1875 Isma’il was deeply in debt and sold the remaining shares of his Suez Canal holdings. Isma’il was frequently reminded that he was not only a subject of the Sultan in Istanbul, but also indebted to London and Paris. In order to secure at least partial payment for the debts they were owed, European stakeholders came together to establish the Egyptian Mixed Courts, a sort of international tribunal through which non-Egyptians could bring claims against the Egyptian government and each other. These courts were meant to simplify Egyptian law in the wake of modernization, yet they were oriented towards allowing foreigners and

⁵⁴ Czeslaw Jesman, "Egyptian Invasion of Ethiopia," *African Affairs* Volume 58, No. 230 (1959), 81.

⁵⁵ Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Army* 153-4.

foreign corporations to make claims against Egypt and Egyptians, rather than the other way around.⁵⁶

Isma'il was unable to sustain the large army he had assembled. Among the first to go were members of the American mission. Egypt's European creditors had long opposed US-Egyptian military cooperation. In 1870, the British Lord Richard Lyons, for example, warned Nubar Pasha, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, that "the road upon which His highness seemed to be launched was a bad road and could not lead to anything good." France also opposed closer ties between the United States and Egypt: Ferdinand de Lesseps warned, "France...cannot support this policy, and will be compelled to side with England and the rest of Europe. America will be far away, and it is not Egypt or the Canal that will suffer, but the Khedive."⁵⁷ Ultimately, France and Britain won out. On July 3, 1878, Consul General Elbert Farman reported that all but two Americans had been dismissed from the service of the Khedive. Aside from Erasmus Purdy, who died penniless in Cairo three years later, Stone was the only remaining US mercenary working for Egypt.⁵⁸ A year later, the Sultan dismissed Isma'il at the urging of Britain and France. Isma'il's son Tawfiq replaced his father as Khedive, and Stone was retained as Chief of

⁵⁶ Jasper Yeates Brinton, *The Mixed Courts of Egypt*, Revised Edition. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). For a "brutally condensed" account of the ways in which the Mixed Courts helped to spawn a legal elite in Egypt and their role in Egyptian nationalism only to be displaced by military and technocratic elite at the middle of the twentieth century, see Amr Shalakany, "'I Heard It All Before': Egyptian Tales of Law and Development," *Third World Quarterly* 27, no. 5 (2006). Elbert Farman, who worked as US Consul-General from 1876 to 1881, subsequently served as a judge on the Mixed Courts from 1881 to 1884.

⁵⁷ Lyons was referring to the large arms purchases that Egypt was making from the American company Remington. Crabitès, *Americans in the Egyptian Army*, 44-45.

⁵⁸ Farman, *Cairo, July 3, 1878*. ———, *Cairo, June 23, 1881*.

the Egyptian General Staff. Some of the United States' most experienced soldiers were, once again, out of work.

Before the Uprising

Upon arriving back in the United States, many of the former members of the American mission told their side of the story. The American public, however, was already aware of their exploits. In 1870, not long after they found their way into Egyptian service, the *New York Times* had published a list of these mercenaries, as well as their rank and pay in Egypt.⁵⁹ And in 1871, the *Times* returned to these "distinguished military officers," describing their "talent" in modernizing the Egyptian army while painting a flattering portrait of Isma'il and his Minister of War, Nubar Pasha.⁶⁰ News of Chaillé-Long's expedition to Buganda in 1874 gave the *New York Times* a reason to revisit the American mission. In 1871, the paper barely mentioned Charles Stone by name, but by 1875 it felt comfortable calling him "the most famous American officer in the service of the Khédive."⁶¹ In 1877 Long published *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People*.⁶² Shortly before Charles Gordon's death in 1885, Long published his second book, *The Three Prophets: Chinese Gordon, Mohammed-Ahmed (el Maahdi), Arabi Pasha*, an analysis of Anglo-Egyptian policy in the Sudan.⁶³ In the intervening years, William

⁵⁹ "American Officers in the Service of the Khedive," *The New York Times*, August 26, 1870.

⁶⁰ "The American Officers in the East--Who They Are and What They Are Doing," *The New York Times*, July 27, 1871.

⁶¹ "American Officers in Egypt," *The New York Times*, January 19, 1875.

⁶² Chaillé-Long, *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People. An Account of Expeditions to the Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Makraka Niam-Niam, West of the Bahr-El-Abiad (White Nile)*.

⁶³ ———, *The Three Prophets: Chinese Gordon, Mohammed-Ahmed (El Maahdi), Arabi Pasha. Events before and after the Bombardment of Alexandria* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1884).

McEntyre Dye and William Loring found outlets to explain their role in the War with Abyssinia and the debacle at Gura. In 1880, Dye published *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia; or, Military service under the Khedive*. Four years later, Loring published *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt*. Beyond the specifics of the Abyssinian war, these mercenary narratives also commented widely on modern Egypt.

In 1881, Raleigh Colston, who spent six years in Egypt, produced an account of Egypt, "Modern Egypt and Its People," which attempted to make sense of the country racially—the land of the Fellaheen and the Copts, he said—while describing the current state of affairs in the country. Colston, who saw few reasons for the army to remain loyal to foreign rulers and mercenaries, noted that "the soldiers are in fact the best and truest representatives of the people, from which they are drawn by conscription, and they are the most intelligent of the fellaheen masses, for they have acquired in the army new ideas which would never have occurred to them if they had remained in their villages." Colston observed, "it is evident that they are waking up to a sense of their power."⁶⁴ Colston equated the professionalization of the military with modernization and national aspirations, yet he was just as strongly drawn to another, more familiar, version of the country.

Accounts of Egypt produced by the US mercenaries who served there in the 1870s were not absent anachronistic, Orientalist landscapes. Take, for example, Colston's description of the occupants of the Arab quarters of Cairo, whom he compares to characters from the *Arabian Nights*:

⁶⁴ Colston, "Modern Egypt and Its People," 150.

The flow of life in these narrow streets is wonderful. Crowds of common people in long blue or white cotton blouses hanging to their feet, with a red tarboush (fez) surrounded by folds of white cotton as turbans. The women of the lower class wear nothing but a long, loose gown of deep blue cotton stuff, open from the throat to the waist, around which they wear no sort of belt or girdle. On their heads a long blue veil, tied above the eyebrows and hanging down the back to the heels, while another long, narrow strip of blue or white hides the face, leaving nothing visible but the eyes which are frequently of marvelous beauty when found in well-matched pairs, which is not often the case.⁶⁵

As a whole, however, the narratives of the American mission focused more heavily on modern Egypt than comparable texts from the period. Yet Colston's description of a typical Oriental city demonstrates that the members of the American mission had two very different visions of the country; the anachronistic Oriental Egypt was often the Other of failed modernization. Furthermore, both visions of Oriental and modern Egypt were heavily inflected by gender.

In "Modern Egypt and Its People"—delivered to the American Geographical Society of New York—Colston closed with a section on the "the fair sex." He began, "it is well known that in Moslem countries women hold an inferior position. They are kept strictly guarded, and among the wealthy classes they are never allowed to go out unattended by eunuchs."⁶⁶ Though he claimed to have saved his reflections on the fair sex until the end of his lecture, Colston had been talking about gender much earlier in his paper, when he said "the contrast of modern innovations and ancient barbarism is of continual occurrence here."⁶⁷ His example harkened back more than two decades to the social world of the Alawiyya Dynasty in the years after the death of Mehmed Ali—whom

⁶⁵ Ibid., 139.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 152-153.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 141.

Colston viewed as the father of modern Egypt. This example is worth quoting at length, because it demonstrates the ways in which gender and modernity were often linked in the mercenary narratives of the American mission:

Just between the New Hotel and Shepard's Hotel, in the most frequented part of the European quarter stands a building whose history brings all the darkness of the Middle Ages in juxtaposition with modern civilization. It is a palace of Arab architecture, surrounded by a palm grove and enclosed with a lofty stone wall. In that palace, less than twenty-five years ago, lived the widowed daughter of Mohammed Ali—the widow of the famous Defterdar, who thought no more of cutting off a head than of slicing an orange. She was a beautiful and talented woman, but licentious and cruel, and many were the victims decoyed into her palace by her emissaries that never came out, except sewed up in a sack to be thrown into the Nile. One of them, however, being well armed, killed four or five of his assailants and escaped. This princess whose power at court was very great, was one of the chief actors in the assassination of her nephew, Abbas-Pasha, in 1854. Said-Pasha—her brother—his successor, was afraid of his ambitious sister and sent her off to Constantinople, where she made herself so dangerous that she soon drank a cup of coffee which disagreed with her, an accident of frequent occurrence with troublesome characters in the East. The story resembles closely that of Margaret of Burgundy, wife of Louis X. of France; but that queen lived 600 years ago, when such deeds were not out of harmony with the times, while the present generation still remember the Princess Nuzla Hanum.⁶⁸

Like so many other accounts produced in the years leading up to the British occupation of the country, Colston's example is rich with anachronism and charged racial and gender language. In Colston's account, it is the presence of Europeans that makes Egypt modern. The lingering Arab influence—a world hidden from Colston's view by a "lofty stone wall"—is slowly being overtaken by modern ideas. Egyptian womanhood, in Colston's account, is menacing, to say the least. In the absence of the father—Mehmed Ali—Egypt appears capable of supporting archaic cruelty, which Colston's account takes for granted

⁶⁸ Ibid.

has long been eliminated from the civilized West. The military guidance of the American mission appeared to be the force necessary to keep this gendered component of Egyptian identity suppressed. But with the failure of the American mission, Egyptian modernity now seemed impossible.

Modernity did indeed come to Egypt, however. Looking back in 1882, *The Sun* in Baltimore attributed the departure of the Americans to “a hostile pressure.” The hostile pressure *The Sun* referred to was the continued maneuvering of France and Britain to establish hegemony.⁶⁹ This maneuvering continued after the departure of the Americans, and France and Britain both responded with hostility to the intensification of a nationalist movement led by a charismatic Egyptian named Ahmed 'Urabi. Calls of “Egypt for Egyptians” within the rank and file of the army had come to a head following drastic cutbacks in military spending—mostly salaries—as a result of Egypt’s agreement with the Porte and its European creditors. The American mercenaries had been in Egypt for less than a decade, but native soldiers had labored since the time of Mehmed Ali under the command of Turkish, French, American, and other officers who showed them little regard. Now they were not even being paid for this discourtesy. Seven years after the humiliation at Gura, 'Urabi led a protest and uprising against continued foreign meddling in Egypt and rapidly ascended to the post of Minister of War, being recognized by the Sultan in Istanbul and the Khedive in Cairo. He also continued to claim a higher

⁶⁹ “American Officers and the Egyptian Army,” *The Sun*, July 12, 1882.

authority—the Egyptian people.⁷⁰ Forced to appeal for help when it appeared that 'Urabi might depose him, Tawfiq found the British—who were concerned about defaults on their large loans to Egypt as well as the status of Suez—more than willing to step in where Istanbul would not. The British proceeded to move against the nationalists, first by sea and then by land.

On July 11, 1882, the British Navy bombarded Alexandria. Just before the British bombardment began, Chaillé-Long—who had returned to Egypt to practice law after attending law school at Columbia—along with Stone and the city's diplomatic staff, departed to boats a safe distance from shore; the civilians who remained in the city were left vulnerable to the British bombs. The British claimed the bombing was not targeted at civilians, but death and destruction were widespread.⁷¹ Stone judged this attack by the British harshly, despite having worked in military service for over forty years. In the aftermath of the attack, Long was appointed Acting US Consul-General and on July 13, 1882, US Marines once again returned to Alexandria. But rather than a brief stopover on their way into the Libyan desert—as in 1805—this deployment took place in order to secure the US consulate, as well as property and neighborhoods in the diplomatic quarter of city. In a letter to President Chester Arthur, Stone praised Long for having returned so quickly to the city after the bombardment and raising the US flag over the city.⁷² For all

⁷⁰ Juan R.I. Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's 'Urabi Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁷¹ In *The Egyptian Campaigns, 1882 to 1885* (1899), Charles Royle cites Stone's figure of 700 Egyptians killed. Charles Royle, *The Egyptian Campaigns, 1882 to 1885*, New and Revised Edition, Continues to December 1899. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1900), 74.

⁷² Charles P. Stone, *Alexandria, Charles Stone to President of the United States, July 24, 1882*, C. Chaillé-Long Papers, 1809-1918 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress).

intents and purposes, the British attack and subsequent occupation ended Stone's career in Egypt. But while Isma'il, Stone, and Farman were able to breakfast together in Paris the following winter, the British exiled 'Urabi to British Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).⁷³ In 1901, Khedive Abbas II allowed 'Urabi to return to Egypt, where he died in 1911. In 1914, the British deposed Abbas II. Britain continued to dominate Egypt until the successful Arab nationalist revolution of 1952.⁷⁴

After the Uprising

In the United States, the bombardment of Alexandria became the climactic moment used to frame the American mission to Egypt—and in many ways to deflect attention away from the mission's failure to achieve military success in the Abyssinian campaign or anywhere else. The manhood of the former Civil War veterans was at stake and had to be played off against the decidedly unmanly actions of the British in failing to give proper notice before attacking Alexandria and then failing to render aid immediately after the bombardment. The mercenary narratives that the members of the American mission produced were rich with US exceptionalism and criticisms of Britain imperialism, but they were also weighed down by domestic discourses that prove crucial to understanding the wide-ranging outcomes of US mercenary encounters with the Ottoman world.

⁷³ Elbert E. Farman, *Egypt and Its Betrayal; an Account of the Country During the Periods of Isma'il and Tewfik Pashas, and of How England Acquired a New Empire* (New York: The Grafton Press, 1908), 272.

⁷⁴ In *My Life in Four Continents*, Chaillé-Long claims he visited 'Urabi on his way back from Korea in 1889. Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents*, 392. This might be true. Arthur Dep notes that the exiles received many visitors, meaning that "Arabi was subject to intrusions, always not of a pleasant nature." Arthur C. Dep, *The Egyptian Exiles in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), (1883-1901)* (Colombo: Arabi Pasha Centenary Celebrations Committee of the All Ceylon Muslim League, 1983), 17. For a broad overview of developments in Egypt during colonial rule, see Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Domestic space was one of the most important undercurrents in the mercenary diplomacy that the members of the American mission practiced on their return to the United States, demonstrating how closely Americans drew themselves to Egyptians. But even within the confines of domestic discourse, there were differences among the mercenary narratives that the mission produced. For instance, for all its evaluations of the role of the military in Egyptian modernization, Colston's account could not escape the gendered logics of Orientalism. As he described Cairo, the seat of the Egyptian government and the home of the General Staff, Colston attempted to find his way into the domestic spaces hidden from view—he could not resist the urge to demonstrate mastery of multiple aspects of the Orient. His is the standard fleeting glimpse of the harem as it passes him by:

One of the most picturesque and Oriental sights of Cairo is often beheld on a bright moonlight night. A great handsome carriage, drawn by a pair of large English horses and full of lovely, half-veiled, fair Circassian and Georgian women. Two mounted janizaries, with long pistols in their holsters and curved scimitars at their sides, gallop some twenty yards in front. Behind come four syces, in pairs, with cressets full of burning light-wood, then two more syces with wands. At each side of the carriage rides a mounted eunuch, and a pair of them follow the carriage, and behind them, another couple of mounted janizaries. They pass you at full speed, the flashing of dark eyes mingling with that of diamonds. They are the wives of a prince taking a moonlight drive—but all the guards which surround them are unable to intercept the fiery yet wistful glances of eyes that were made for love, and must know only the slavery of the hareem.⁷⁵

Colston's account of the gendered world of the Oriental harem—in which women are enslaved because he has no access to them—might seem standard for the time, but it is an

⁷⁵ Colston, "Modern Egypt and Its People," 140.

entirely different account of the harem than would be produced just a few years later by Charles Stone when he returned to the United States.

After his return from Egypt in 1883, Stone contributed to a much more complicated explanation of Egyptian gender as he filtered the country through his particular experience as an insider among the military and diplomatic elite. For his part, Stone positioned himself as an expert on Egyptian affairs—not difficult since it was widely known that he had served much longer than other members of the American mission. Stone played the role of expert on Egyptian affairs while simultaneously speaking out against the British occupation of Egypt. In a paper presented to the American Geographical Society of New York, Stone acknowledged that the venue was “not precisely the place for the discussion of political subjects, [but] I feel that should I, under present circumstances, fail to speak somewhat of the ex-Khédive Ismaïl I might be supposed to have joined the great army of the ungrateful, and I would not like to have that supposed of me.” Stone lamented that “his enemies who drove him [Isma’il], against the will of his own people, from his throne, have had the opportunity to write the history of his reign in European languages for the moment, and to create public opinion in the Western world to justify the infamous treatment he received from the governments of Europe.”⁷⁶ Support for Isma’il’s reforms was a constant theme of Stone’s writing until his death in 1887.

⁷⁶ Charles P. Stone, “The Political Geography of Egypt,” *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 15 (1883).

Stone's take on Isma'il's administration is interesting, yet his address is most remarkable because it begins with a thoroughly modern take on Egyptian gender politics and the role of the harem in Egyptian life. Contrary to Colston, who placed Egyptian women in an entirely subordinate position to men, Stone prefaced his remarks on Egyptian development by recognizing that the conditions for women in Egypt and the United States were, first of all, different. He observed that there were many women in the audience in New York; in Egypt there were no women at the meetings of the Khedivial Geographical Society. Yet, while American women were free to appear in public settings, women in Egypt had different, but equally valuable rights in his estimation. Most importantly, the portion of the home reserved for women belonged, inviolably, to them. An American husband might enter his wife's private chambers, but in Egypt that was a line a man could not cross. Of course Stone's observation was based on his idealized notion of upper class and urban Egyptian life, which secured these kinds of privileged domestic spaces in ways that most women in Egypt could not expect. But what Stone seemed to be selling as Egyptian women's agency sounds a lot like the cult of domesticity and the ideology of separate spheres in the United States.

By his own admission, Stone had no way to further intrude on the domestic space of Egyptian women. But he did feel comfortable commenting extensively on the space of Egyptian manhood—the army. A year after his presentation to the American Geographical Society of New York, Stone was invited to present a paper before the Military Service Institution on Governor's Island in New York. The society, which described itself as “An Institution which has the military interests of the country at heart,”

was formed in 1878 as a means for present and former officers to network. Stone's presentation, subsequently published in the society's journal, offers further insights into the ways in which mercenary diplomacy worked to advocate for Egypt in the United States.⁷⁷ The address also offers valuable insight into the ways in which Stone viewed the work he did in Egypt, as well as the more abstract components of his labor.

Standing before the members of the institution, Stone once again proved that he was skilled at recognizing his audience. At the meeting of the geography society, he acknowledged the women in the audience; at this meeting of former soldiers he acknowledged their shared domestic trouble. He began by speaking of the "fatigues and hardships" of "hard frontier duty" for women in both ancient Egypt—more easily recognizable than modern Egypt for the military men in attendance—and the contemporary United States. Stone pointed out—probably to a few laughs—that "the luxuries and the instruments of music of those days, with which the Egyptian ladies were wont to charm their lovers and their lords, were much more easy of transportation than the grand pianos of to-day; were more easily protected from ruin and dust, and more easily arranged when 'out of tune.'"⁷⁸ Weaving together the frontier, the domestic, and the responsibilities of men and women to uphold civilization as embodied through courtship and performance, Stone appeared to have a wide-ranging grasp of military life.

Stone's address to the assembled soldiers helped to further cement a particular genealogy of modern Egypt in the United States. He traced the origins of modern Egypt

⁷⁷ ———, "Military Affairs in Egypt," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* V, no. No. XXVIII (1884).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

to Mehmed Ali, whom he described as a “born leader of men.”⁷⁹ According to Stone, the mercenary army that Ali assembled was the first true Egyptian army in over three-hundred years. Further, Stone located the defining moment of this mercenary army—an instrument of nationalism—not in the defeat of the Mamluks, but in the defeat of the British in 1807.⁸⁰ Here, Stone’s story resembles the exceptional narrative of the US Revolutionary War against the British. Egypt—or rather the Albanian mercenaries who ruled it—had prevented the British from establishing hegemony over the land. This revolutionary act—the defeat of the British—established the modern state in both places. Eventually, both states also went on to become imperial powers in their own right. Egypt in Sudan and Syria. The United States all across the western frontier and Mexico.

Stone was too young to have been part of the revolutionary generation in the United States. In Mexico and California he had worked as an engineer. And his role in the Civil War was scapegoat rather than hero. But in Egypt, Stone found a mythos in which he could place himself. He traced his own lineage in the history of modern Egypt to a French mercenary, Colonel Séve, a veteran of Napoleon’s army who went to work in Egypt after the fall of the First Empire. Stone describes Séve—who converted to Islam and took the name Süleyman Pasha—as “a soldier of severe principles and a high sense of the dignity of the military profession.” Mehmed Ali appointed Süleyman Chief of the General Staff of the Egyptian Army, the same position that Ali’s grandson Isma’il appointed Stone to in 1870. Stone credits Séve with the successful organization of the

⁷⁹ Ibid., 158.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Egyptian army in the 1820s and 30s.⁸¹ This army was among the finest in the world at the time. But if Süleyman Pasha was successful, why was Stone unsuccessful? Stone explains that the Egyptian army's fortunes failed after the 1830s due in to fault on Egypt's part, but simply due to the poor odds the country found itself up against. Egypt's 1841 defeat was before "a coalition of nearly the same powers before whom Napoleon and the French army yielded in 1815, and the defeat cannot be considered as a disgraceful one for them."⁸² Isma'il and Stone failed, just as Mehmed Ali and Süleyman Pasha failed, because the odds were against them. In order to secure his reputation in the United, Stone used his position as Chief of Mercenaries to situate himself as a loyal soldier in a lost cause.

Within the militarized narrative that Stone constructed to explain modern Egyptian history, Isma'il becomes praiseworthy because he worked to revive the Egyptian army against all these odds—the British, the French, the debt crisis, the Abyssinians, and the Africans. He dared to be like his grandfather, Mehmed Ali. Stone locates an exceptional role for the US mercenaries in this revitalization project—national, with a masculine genealogy. While Süleyman Pasha was exceptional because he converted to Islam and spent the remainder of his life in Egypt, he was not exceptional in the sense of being a French mercenary in Egypt's army. There were many of these— in fact, a whole "*mission Française*," which the US mercenaries replaced. But unlike Süleyman, no members of the American mission ever professed in public to have

⁸¹ Ibid., 162.

⁸² Ibid., 165.

converted to Islam. It was necessary, therefore, for Stone to explain the exceptionalism of the American mission by claiming that, excepting Süleyman Pasha, the members of the French mission always remained agents of the French Emperor and Consul-General and never fully reliable. In contrast, Stone claims, “far from becoming an ‘American Mission,’ [the US mercenaries] became in fact and deed, according to their grades, officers of the Egyptian Army.”

It is important to be clear here: in 1884, a year after he left Egyptian service, Stone rejected the claim that the US mercenaries who went to Egypt composed an American mission. In 1912, Long professed a totally different opinion. Long embraced the American mission because he desired recognition at the end of his life. Stone severed the connection between the United States and its mercenaries in 1884 because that was the only way to prove, once and for all, that he was a loyal soldier—in short, a total military professional. By claiming that a lack of national interest “increased their [the US mercenaries’] proper influence with the Egyptian officers and authorities,” Stone also positioned himself as a valuable Egyptian asset, rather than a humiliated Agesilaus. In order to fully establish that the United States had no interest in Egypt—that the United States was exceptional, and somehow anti-imperial in the Ottoman world—Stone claimed “no change of European politics could possibly touch the interests of Americans in the Egyptian service to render [them] antagonistic to Egypt.” Stone’s effort to claim an exceptional role for himself and the other US mercenaries seems somewhat disingenuous, however. The American mission, while not explicitly carrying out US policy, was at the very least helping Egypt to resist European policy as a way of increasing US influence in

the Ottoman world. Mott and Butler blatantly attempted to line their pockets. And even though Stone did not see himself as an agent of US policy, let alone self-interested, he advocated for Remington and was on intimate terms with US consular officials.⁸³ Yet in Stone's estimation, the United States had no desire to influence affairs in Egypt, or was at least unable to exercise its desire through the bodies of the US mercenaries who traveled to Egypt to work for the Khedive.⁸⁴ Stone emphasized that both he and the government of the United States were acting in good faith.

Severed from all interest in the United States, Stone's address goes on to give an overview of the deficiencies of the Egyptian army in 1870 and the steps that were taken to modernize. Literacy campaigns were undertaken, coastal defenses were constructed, and cartridge factories were built. Well aware that the rank and file of the army were drawn from the fellahin, who formed the agricultural backbone of the nation, leaves of absences were granted for soldiers to return to seed and harvest crops. Finally, maps, railways, and telegraph lines were used to help organize the militarized space of the modern nation. With these reforms undertaken, it was not long before "a letter dropped into the post-office in the center of Darfour, or in Gondokoro, or Berberah, with a five-cent stamp upon it, addressed to London or San Francisco, went safely and rapidly to its destination."⁸⁵ Stone, then, posits a modernity that is organized around the regimentation of time and space by the military. Stone claims that efforts to further modernize Egypt's

⁸³ Stone's account of the American mission is also unique because he gives no names, only titles. He describes the actions of the Chief of Staff of the Egyptian General Staff, but never says it was him. When he describes Long's Central African expedition, he says only "in 1874 one of the American officers pushed through to Lake Victoria." (174)

⁸⁴ Stone, "Military Affairs in Egypt," 166-167.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 168-175.

military were hamstrung, though, when the creditors came calling. Under the influence of his European ministers, Isma'il cut military spending. Stone explains that the financial crisis was most acutely felt by soldiers. Schools for soldiers and their children were closed. No salary arrears were paid to soldiers, while huge payments were made to foreigners. Nevertheless, because they were loyal to the Khedive, the officers of the army "spoke not of revolt through months of their oppression."⁸⁶ According to Stone, these attempts by European powers to deny Egypt sovereignty by denying it an army eventually led to disaster at Alexandria and a rule even more arbitrary than Isma'il's.⁸⁷

Though he condemns 'Urabi and the nationalists, Stone describes the uprising as "the natural result of the action of the representatives of England and France and of those Governments." He singles out England in particular, accusing the nation of playing the role of "destroyer." In spite of British intervention—which came in on the side of Tawfiq against the nationalists—Stone continues to emphasize the loyalty of the army to the Khedive: "the most intelligent part of the army remained faithful" and "the British Army had to fight only the body of the Egyptian Army, without its brains."⁸⁸ Ultimately, though, Stone's sentiments in Egypt lay with the army, which he believed he had no small part in creating.

Let us hope, however, that the Egyptian Army, whose fortunes we have to-day followed through thousands of years, which we have considered in glorious successes and sad defeats, which has sometimes disappeared for generations and sometimes for centuries, and yet again reappeared and existed gloriously, may again, and that soon, within the time even of some of the elders among us,

⁸⁶ Ibid., 176-177.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 180-181.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 181-182.

reappear in renewed glory, to assure greatness and happiness in the beautiful land of the Pharaohs.

In the wake of the 2013 coup d'état in Egypt, Stone's desire for a militarized seems prescient. And indeed, serving as Chief of Staff for the Egyptian army throughout the 1870s and the intimate knowledge he claimed based on this experience provided Stone with some social capital within the US military community.

In a footnote to Stone's speech, General Daniel Sickles thanked Stone for demonstrating the importance of the army to Egyptian independence.⁸⁹ Yet Sickles deviated from the significance of contemporary events in Egypt, embracing instead the role of the West in civilizing the Dark Continent and the fantasy of ancient Egypt:

It seems as if African exploration, African discovery, African invasion, African spoliation, were now the favorite employment of European adventure and enterprise. No doubt the world, from the point of view of civilization, has much to gain from this movement, and yet General Stone touched a chord of sympathy in our bosoms, when he depicted the ancient glories of that great Empire to which civilization owes so much, and from which even the most enlightened nations derived much of the inspiration that guided their progress.

Sympathetic imperialism would continue to be an ongoing theme in the United States approaching the Spanish American War in 1898. But with the US Civil War still fresh in Sickles' memory—it was approaching the twentieth-anniversary of the war's end—Sickles had in mind “the patriotism, zeal, and ability” that Stone showed in his defense of Washington, DC in 1861. Redeemed—if he was ever really lost to begin with—Stone's next published work was an introduction to a diary account of one episode at the end of the American mission that has been widely misread by historians.

⁸⁹ Sickles was even more infamous than Stone. After killing Francis Scott Key's son in a duel, he served as an antebellum congressman and then a Civil War general.

“AN AMERICAN GIRL IN CAIRO”

In June 1884, *The Century*, the widely-read successor to *Scribner's Monthly Magazine*, published “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882.” The author was Fanny Stone, Charles Stone’s daughter who was seventeen at the time she recorded her experience.⁹⁰ The Stone family, like most of the General Staff, lived in Cairo, the center of the Egyptian government, rather than in Alexandria, a bustling port city. In the days leading up to the British attack, Charles Stone traveled from Cairo to Alexandria with his son John, leaving his wife and daughters in the care of the General Staff in Cairo. Father and son were among the Americans evacuated in the hours leading up to the bombardment on July 11. When the British subsequently landed an invasion force, virtually all connections between Alexandria and Cairo were severed.⁹¹ In Cairo, the Stone women remained sequestered for about five weeks before they were able to leave Egypt via Port Said. The diary that Fanny kept during these five weeks—which she was probably keeping all along—is a record of impressions and opinions formed after more than a decade in Cairo.

Some writers have approached Fanny’s diary as a straight-forward account of “what happened” or as evidence of the threat the 'Urabi Uprising posed to the West,

⁹⁰ Fanny, the middle of three daughters, was born September 10, 1864. Fanny and her younger sister, Jeanne, were born to Stone’s second wife, Jeannie. Hettie, the oldest of the three daughters, was born to Maria Louisa Clary, Stone’s first wife. “Be It Known and Remembered,” in, *WILLIAM SILFORD SANDERS BIBLE* (Louisiana Geneological and Historical Society, April 1998).

⁹¹ In a telegram in which he reported that he had lost his personal effects and the diplomatic archives somewhere between Alexandria and Cairo, the US Consul General reported “Egypt’s [sic] situation desperate.” The lost property was later relocated. N. S. Comanos, *Alexandria, July 23, 1882*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Cairo, Egypt 1864-1906 (College Park, MD: National Archives II). ———, *Alexandria, August 3, 1882*, Records of the Department of State, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Cairo, Egypt 1864-1906 (College Park, MD: National Archives II).

embodied by three white women holed up in Cairo. In one essay in her collection *Americans in Egypt, 1770-1915* (2012), Cassandra Vivian argues that Fanny's diary offers insight into the effects of the British attack on ordinary people.⁹² But was Fanny really ordinary? First of all, her father was the Chief of the General Staff of the Egyptian Army. Fanny grew up in the foreign colony, surrounded by Italian, French, and British colonists, and probably spent most of her time at home, where her family was attended to by Egyptian servants. The family hosted significant military and political figures from the United States, including Sherman and Grant, and even received a visit from Ralph Waldo Emerson, to whom they "showed great courtesy."⁹³ Fanny was insulated from "ordinary life" in many ways. And when the inevitable humanitarian intervention followed the British assault, Fanny, her two sisters, and her mother, were among its first priorities.⁹⁴

While Vivian fails to recognize the conditions that shaped Fanny's subject position, Michael Oren uses the diary to support a typical Orientalist reading of the uprising. In *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (2007), Oren misrepresents the contents of Fanny's diary to maintain the fiction of an Orient that threatens Westerners, especially women. Oren's errors are frequent and range from subtle to blatant: First, Oren cites Jeannie's plea that her daughters protect their virtue at all costs, including suicide, but he fails to mention that Jeannie made the girls

⁹² Cassandra Vivian, *Americans in Egypt, 1770-1915 : Explorers, Consuls, Travelers, Soldiers, Missionaries, Writers and Scientists* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2012). Vivian also mistakenly states that Charles Stone never shared his view about events in Egypt. Ibid., 249.

⁹³ *Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1820-1876*. vol. Volume X (Bston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914), 406.

⁹⁴ The status of the Stone women in Cairo is mentioned in nearly every diplomatic communication sent from the Consul General in Alexandria in the weeks following the attack.

specifically promise to “never let an Arab touch you.” She continued, “when it comes to that, remember I expect you to save yourselves by putting a bullet through your heart. Don’t leave me to do it.”⁹⁵ And no ululating women “pelted the house with rocks,” as Oren claims. It is unclear if Oren is talking about the Arab women—in Fanny’s words—“going through the streets to-night wailing and covering their heads with dust” as they mourn the dead, or Fanny’s dubious second-hand report of Egyptian women’s “cry of joy” after two European officials were chopped into pieces and fed to dogs. In neither case were rocks or stones involved.⁹⁶ Oren is right that a small band of children (led by a man) stood outside the gate chanting. What they said, according to Fanny, was “Long live Arabi! God give him victory! Death to the Christians!” Of course Oren fails to tell his reader that the soldiers guarding the family promptly chased the children off with clubs, and then demanded that the local police ensure there were no more protests, which they did.⁹⁷ Contrary, in fact, to Oren’s claim that the family had no contact with their father while they were sequestered in Cairo, Charles Stone sent money and several letters.⁹⁸ Charles Stone did not have much to worry about, as Oren somehow reasons, because the women were guarded and respected by the nationalists at all times. In his introduction to Fanny’s diary, Stone is, in fact, very clear about how well his wife and

⁹⁵ Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 267. Fanny Stone, “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882,” *The Century*, June, 1884, 291.

⁹⁶ Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 267. Stone, “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882,” 290, 294.

⁹⁷ Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 267. Stone, “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882,” 295, 297.

⁹⁸ ———, “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882,” 291, 297, 299.

daughters were treated in Cairo during the uprising.⁹⁹ In spite of the warnings she received from her mother, Fanny agrees that the women were treated well. At one point—about halfway through their sequestration—Fanny described how the women started their days: “we take our walk every morning. It is like walking through an enchanted city of fairy tales. In the whole European quarter there is not a house open excepting our own.”¹⁰⁰ Finally, it was not, as Oren claims, a daring and sensational carriage ride through the streets of Cairo that carried the women to Port Said; the women traveled to the Red Sea coast in a private, guarded train car provided by 'Urabi. They were allowed to store all their belongings before leaving, and took one servant and a cook with them.¹⁰¹ While Vivien’s account of the diary takes Fanny’s claims at face value without any attention to the form of colonial women’s travel writing, Oren’s account of the diary deals loosely with what Fanny wrote, ignoring the ending of the diary and the ways in which Charles Stone’s preface to his daughter’s account places the reader in a sympathetic relationship with the Egyptians.

Given these terms—it was written by someone who had little experience with Egypt outside the insulated diplomatic bubble in which she lived and who had very little to worry about in Cairo following the British attack on Alexandria—Fanny Stone’s diary provides insight into the domestic life of the American mission, a differently rendered account of the mercenary encounter than available in narratives written by men like

⁹⁹ Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 266-267. Charles P. Stone, "Introductory Letter To: Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882," *The Century*, June, 1884.

¹⁰⁰ Stone, "Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882," 297.

¹⁰¹ Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 267. Stone, "Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882," 299-302.

William Loring or William McEntyre Dye.¹⁰² While neither Loring nor Dye overlooks the existence or value of the domestic world, Fanny Stone recognizes better than either man the unique gendered demands placed on women in war.¹⁰³ Read at the level of gender and reproduction, Fanny Stone's diary reveals the responsibilities and privileges of white women within the social order of Victorian domesticity, as well as the role of the Other in this fantasy world. Fanny Stone's vision of white womanhood—as it plays out in Egypt—closely mirrors the domestic visions of US imperialism in general; the domestic space of US empire is always already imagined as threatened by the foreign. In Cairo, like elsewhere, the foundations of the domestic depended on a militarized regime of racial and sexual purity, which explains why Jeannie Stone made her children promise to protect their virtue from Arabs and why she cautioned them to “be brave and face death like good soldiers.”¹⁰⁴

The constantly threatened domestic world, dependent on the labor of women, is nevertheless commanded by men. Even when offered “as much money as she needed,” Stone demurred that “I cannot leave Cairo until I have permission from the general.”¹⁰⁵ Jeannie Stone concluded that rather than fleeing Cairo—abandoning the domestic space she occupied, which would surely jeopardize her husband and son's internal states—the three women would instead “stay at home like brave women, and live like Christians as

¹⁰² William McEntyre Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia; or, Military Service under the Khedive, in His Provinces and, Beyond Their Borders, as Experienced by the American Staff* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969). Loring, *A Confederate Soldier in Egypt*.

¹⁰³ In his book, Dye described life in Egypt, which he said was “the Texas of Europe.” Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia; or, Military Service under the Khedive, in His Provinces and, Beyond Their Borders, as Experienced by the American Staff*, 19.

¹⁰⁴ Stone, “Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882,” 291.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 292.

long as we can.”¹⁰⁶ The demands of fidelity extended further: Jeannie concluded, “rather than obey an order or Arabi Pacha [sic] that would compromise my husband’s fidelity to the Khedive, I would let them kill me.”¹⁰⁷ Jeannie assured the girls, however, that “there never lived an Arab who could frighten me.”¹⁰⁸ After several weeks of isolation in Cairo, Fanny wondered aloud about the lives of women who did not have it so good, writing “I often think of what Jo said in ‘Little Women,’ ‘I wonder what girls do who have not a good mother.’”¹⁰⁹ Fanny was reassured by the presence of her mother, who acted as an essential component of the domestic drama of the American mission. By performing a US-inflected domesticity in Cairo and then recounting this performance for the benefit of *The Century*’s audience, Fanny’s mercenary narrative contributed to the cosmopolitanism of US culture as well as the racial attitudes that would influence future approaches to Egypt and the Middle East.¹¹⁰

Steeped in Orientalist tropes, Fanny’s diary does not confine itself to rehearsing the domestic but also lays out a methodology for managing racial difference that bears a remarkable similarity to Chaillé-Long’s methods in Central Africa. Stone begins by describing the refugees streaming in from Alexandria as “filthy, degraded women, and fierce, brutal men.”¹¹¹ Racialized subjects like these appear to deserve no protection. And Fanny’s account of the family’s relationship with its servants might be drawn straight

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 295.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 296.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 293.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 296.

¹¹⁰ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

¹¹¹ Stone, "Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882," 291.

from body of romantic plantation literature in the United States. Jeannie constantly accuses them of being “faithless wenches,” saying that she had fed and clothed them like a mother before they “turned traitors to her.” She threatened violence unless these servants returned to work, threatening “go to your work, you miserable cowards, and the first time you *look* insolent I will have you thrashed. Never dare to threaten me again unless you are beyond my reach!”¹¹² Some servants, however, remain loyal in Fanny’s narrative. Repeatedly, Fanny describes the Egyptian General Staff as an obedient lot. In the opening pages of the diary, she claims the General Staff offered their allegiance to the family, saying “we never had a friend until Stone Pasha came to Egypt. He took us from poverty and wretchedness, and made us what we are, happy, well-fed, well-dressed men, with our families living in comfort.”¹¹³ Later, Fanny writes that the staff officers swore to the women, “General Stone is the father of the staff; we will protect you with our lives.”¹¹⁴ Of the family’s house servants, Fanny claims their rapt attention as she played “nearer my God to Thee,” writing “when I told them how our dead President loved it, they begged me to play it again.”¹¹⁵ The trope of Egyptian devotion to the Chief of the Mercenaries and of servants as children functions as an avenue for criticizing 'Urabi. Fanny wonders what he and “his creatures would think” if they could see her playing the “sacred music” for the two Muslims.¹¹⁶ All this is evidence of a bias in Stone’s diary that Vivian and Oren ignore.

¹¹² Ibid., 293.

¹¹³ Ibid., 290.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 290-292.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 294.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

Scholars have devoted significant attention to understanding women's travel writing as a form of knowledge production that coalesced in the nineteenth century. In 1982, Catherine Barnes Stevenson proposed a systematized analysis of women's travel writing that would include the motives as well as more formal elements including technique and accuracy. Based on a collection of Victorian travel writing by women, Stevens argued for a gendered understanding of travel writing. Many of the leitmotifs Stevenson identified appear in Fanny's diary: hardship and domestic trials, for example. Yet Fanny's diary is not "calculatedly unheroic" as Stevenson argues of her own case studies. And rather than opening up "new possibilities for the female self," Fanny focuses on the role of women in the creation and preservation of domestic, rather than public or cosmopolitan roles.¹¹⁷ In fact, Fanny appears to pathologize women who adopt public or cosmopolitan roles, ignoring the demands of the domestic economy. In an unpublished letter to her father, Fanny called Mary Custis, Robert E. Lee's daughter who had refused to attend the reception for Grant while she was visiting Egypt, "a horrible ugly old maid, and very *queer*."¹¹⁸ Similarly, Fanny's diary appears to deviate from the model proposed by Sara Mills who concludes that colonial women's travel writings "constitute counter-hegemonic voices within colonial discourse."¹¹⁹ Fanny's diary is strongly pro-Egypt, yes, but also critical of the nationalist uprising. As Mary Louise Pratt points out in *Imperial Eyes* (1992), far from being simply a form of empowerment for women, travel writing

¹¹⁷ Catherine Barnes Stevenson, *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa*, Twayne's English Authors Series (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 160-161.

¹¹⁸ Mary P. Coulling, *The Lee Girls* (Winston-Salem, NC: J.F. Blair, 1987), 189. Custis subsequently became close to Horatio Herbert Kitchener in Egypt.

¹¹⁹ Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991).

also functions as a form of imperial cultural production. And Pratt's work led Laura Wexler to explore the "equivocal story of the role of women" in her analysis of photojournalism and empire at the turn of the twentieth century, *Tender Violence* (2000).¹²⁰ Fanny's diary, then, is rendered from such a perspective as to offer insights into nineteenth-century US middle-class white women's role in empire.

As part of a larger discourse of empire in the years leading up to the expansion of US imperialism at the end of the nineteenth century, Fanny's diary functioned as a kind of preface for other, equally significant cultural work. Fanny's diary was published just five months before *The Century* began publishing its immensely popular collection of Civil War reminiscences. The series ran for three years and featured the reflections of soldiers ranging from former Confederates General P.T. Beauregard and Colonel R.E. Colston—lately a mercenary in Egypt, to Union General Grant and Colonel John Taylor Wood—who was on the *Merrimac* during its engagement with the *Monitor*.¹²¹ The writers at *The Century* described the collection as a "a carefully organized continuation of the war articles which have appeared from time to time in the magazine since the publication of the notable 'Great South' papers." But something was different about this new series: "in popular interest as well as historical importance the papers to come, it is expected, will deserve wider attention than any other series ever undertaken by the magazine, and prove of lasting value to the history of the most eventful period of our

¹²⁰ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London New York: Routledge, 2008). Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*, Cultural Studies of the United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 6.

¹²¹ Arthur John, *The Best Years of the Century: Richard Watson Gilder, Scribner's Monthly, and Century Magazine, 1870-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 125-129. The series featured 230 former soldiers of all ranks along with 1700 engraved illustrations.

national life.” *The Century* judged that “no time could be fitter, we think, for a publication of this kind than the present, when the passions and prejudices of the Civil War have nearly faded out of politics, and its heroic events are passing into our common history where motives will be weighed without malice, and valor praised without distinction of uniform.” *The Century*’s most important goal was to educate:

the generation which has grown up since the war, to whom these papers will be opportune instruction, may now be taught how the men who were divided on a question of principle and State fealty, and who fought the war which must remain the pivotal period of our history, won by equal devotion and valor that respect for each other which is the strongest bond of a reunited people.¹²²

Broadly speaking, the genre of Civil War reflections helped to forge a strong connection between the Civil War and the experience of US mercenaries in Egypt. In this sense, *The Century* was one of many cultural organs that contributed to the body of reunificatory cultural work that mediated and resolved the tensions between the former combatants of the north and south. Yet *The Century*’s juxtaposition of the Civil War and Egyptian service represents something more than a story about how the Blue and the Gray came together again. It also familiarized Americans with one corner of the modern world at a vital moment in the United States’ development as a world power.

A letter written from Flushing, Long Island and published in the *Ann Arbor Courier* called the Fanny’s diary “the most notable article in the June *Century*.” The *Courier* thought to include a copy of Charles Stone’s introduction to his daughter’s

¹²² “Battles and Leaders of the Civil War,” *The Century*, October, 1884, 943-944. ———, *The Best Years of the Century: Richard Watson Gilder, Scribner’s Monthly, and Century Magazine, 1870-1909*. In an advertisement published in the Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States, *The Century* claimed the series would be composed of “a number of articles of especial interest to soldiers., *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* V, no. No XVII (1885), 4.

account of the tense days in Cairo, apparently because the authorization of the account—and the political commentary it offered—were more important than the account of the women’s tense days in Cairo.¹²³ The question of agency—of both white women and colonial subjects—has been a central concern of analyses of women’s travel writing.¹²⁴ In her study of women’s travel writing, Mills concluded that the primary difference between men and women’s travel writing lays in “the way that women’s writing is judged and processed.”¹²⁵ Fanny’s dairy, published with her father’s authorization, supports Mill’s conclusion, and in a way that recognizes agency as not simply opposed to power, as Walter Johnson points out, but “thick with the material givenness of a moment in time.”¹²⁶ Fanny’s diary can tell us some things about the lives of some women, but it can also tell us much about the forms and practices of US empire. Indeed, Charles Stone authorizes his daughter’s account by narrating the ways in which the document is already subject to strict editorial criteria even beyond his paternal authority, writing in his introduction that “my daughter has corrected the proof of her diary which you sent her.”¹²⁷ He goes on to explain “the circumstances under which the diary was written,” offering context and commentary beyond what the diary reveals, using his preface to once again blame the massacre of Europeans on the British Admiral’s failure to notify

¹²³ "General Stone and the Bombardment of Alexandria," *Ann Arbor Courier*, 28 May, 1884. By describing their days as tense, I do not mean to orient the women as existentially threatened because of any racial menace, but because most people in the midst of war face precarious circumstances.

¹²⁴ Cheryl McEwan, *Gender, Geography and Empire : Victorian Women Travellers in West Africa* (Aldershot ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000).

¹²⁵ Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Travel Writing and Colonialism*, 21-22, 51.

¹²⁶ Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*, 9.

¹²⁷ Stone, "Introductory Letter To: Diary of an American Girl in Cairo During the War of 1882," 289.

Europeans living elsewhere in Egypt of his intention to bombard Alexandria after entering its open harbor as a friend. With little notice given even to the residents of Alexandria—the Admiral’s notice came late in the afternoon—a train full of refugees already on the way from Cairo, and all evacuating vessels directed to leave the harbor before noon, Stone firmly believes the British Admiral has blood on his hands: “this barbarous disregard on the part of the British of the lives of citizens of all other nationalities caused me, as well as thousands of others, fearful anxiety, and caused the horrible death of scores of Europeans—French, Germans, Austrians, and Italians.”¹²⁸ Here Stone avoids blaming the Egyptians for the events in the days following the bombardment, instead focusing again on the British failure. Stone portrayed the failure to provide for the safety of neutral citizens as a failure of manhood—Admiral Seymour should have acted as a protector, fulfilling both his martial and domestic obligations.

Stone repeats his earlier criticism, concluding that if Admiral Seymour had given 48- rather than just 24-hours’ notice, the British “would have been spared the frightful responsibility which now weighs upon them of causing the horrible death of European men, women, and children.”¹²⁹ Stone also goes on to debunk inaccurate reports of what actually happened in Alexandria in the lead up to the British bombardment. “during the so-called ‘massacre’ of June 11th, 1882, in Alexandria, European *men* were struck down by the infuriated populace, but not a woman or child was injured.” Stone, who remained loyal to Isma’il—and held a certain fidelity to the Egypt he believed in— could not help

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

but see the terrible irony of these inaccurate reports. “During the Christian bombardment of Alexandria scores of Egyptian women and children perished, and their husbands, brothers, and fathers wreaked vengeance, a little later, on the innocent and helpless Europeans at Tantah and Mehallet-el-Kebir.” What followed the bombardment, then, was the result of British disregard for women and children. British reports to the contrary were simply wrong.

In many ways, Stone used his prefatory remarks to the diary as a way of situating his own manhood a year after his return to the United States; his statement of faith in the office of the General Staff to protect his family is meant as a testament to both himself and Egypt. By remaining at his post and placing his family in the care of the Egyptian Staff in Cairo, his wife and daughters were spared “the horrors of bombardment.”¹³⁰ As the British occupied Alexandria and campaigned against 'Urabi, Stone remained loyal to the Khedive, conspicuously doing his duty, full well knowing that doing his duty meant additional danger for his family, who remained secluded in Cairo. Stone’s ability to protect his family from the “horrors of bombardment”—to effectively domesticate them—was proof of his honor and of his manhood, the essential counterweight of the domestic in the gendered economy of the Gilded Age in the United States. Stone was careful to also credit Commander Whitehead of the United States Navy ship *Quinnebaug* for helping to reunite him with his family; Stone described how Whitehead entered the Suez Canal and demanded that Stone’s family be brought to him at Ismailia. 'Urabi happily responded to Whitehead’s demand—in reality 'Urabi had been trying to send the

¹³⁰ Ibid., 189.

American woman and her children away for some time. Nevertheless, Stone leveraged the positive outcome of his family's survival—really no miracle—as a way of vindicating his manhood and military professionalism. Stone's mercenary narrative placed the family at the center of this tangled web of exceptionalism, empires, and uprisings. In spite of their anti-imperial tone, however, the Stone family was never kind to 'Urabi.

The strategy Charles and Fanny Stone used to represent the uprising—the miscalculations of the British as a threat to the domestic scene of the American mission—was significantly different than the appraisal of 'Urabi offered a year earlier by Augusta Lady Gregory, a significant figure in the Irish literary revival. In a letter published in *The Times* of London in 1883—subsequently circulated as a pamphlet—Gregory used a domestic discourse to defend 'Urabi. Gregory celebrated 'Urabi's embrace of the domestic. "Arabi and his household" compared the nationalist leader to Hamlet and described him as strongly-built, gentle and humane, strikingly eloquent, and pious. Gregory described a visit she made to 'Urabi's home, where, contrary to published reports, the family lived a modest lifestyle. 'Urabi's wife wore a "pleasant, intelligent expression," but because she had birthed fourteen children, only five of whom survived, she looked "overcome with the cares of maternity, her beauty dimmed." 'Urabi's mother lived with the family and they had only one servant—fewer than the Stone family. In Gregory's account, 'Urabi's wife pleads, "we can't get on without the Christians, or they without us. Why can't we all live in peace together?" In the aftermath of the British attack, 'Urabi's wife was forced to seek refuge in the harem of a "high-minded princess." 'Urabi's mother was "hidden in a poor quarter of the town." The "simple, honest,

hospitable” family is now “poor, hunted, in danger.”¹³¹ By harnessing these descriptions of a respectable domestic life threatened by British imperialism, Gregory hoped to affect many of the same ends as the Stone family. Ultimately, though, the publication of Fanny’s diary worked to ensure that the Stone family in Cairo was remembered in the United States, even if ‘Urabi’s family was not.

By 1884, all these events that the American mission was witness to and involved with were beginning to fade into the past as public attention turned to the Mahdist siege of General Gordon at Khartoum.¹³² In his final State of the Union address, delivered to Congress on December 1, 1884—just six months after Fanny’s diary was published—President Chester Arthur lamented the ongoing absence of US diplomatic representatives from Egypt.

The failure of Congress to make appropriation for our representation at the autonomous court of the Khedive has proved a serious embarrassment in our intercourse with Egypt; and in view of the necessary intimacy of diplomatic relationship due to the participation of this Government as one of the treaty powers in all matters of administration there affecting the rights of foreigners, I advise the restoration of the agency and consulate-general at Cairo on its former basis.

Arthur recognized that even though Egypt was not a nation in the conventional diplomatic sense, it was a place worthy of diplomatic recognition. Arthur therefore

¹³¹ Victoria Alexandrina M.L. Gregory, Hon. Lady Welby, *Arabi and His Household* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1882). As a significant figure of Irish cultural nationalism, Gregory’s romantic nationalist praise for ‘Urabi makes sense. Gregory wondered “why is it that one hears so often of Arabi’s mutiny, but never the first act in the piece which led to it?” She opined that few would speak up alongside her, because “A lady may say what she likes, but a man is called unpatriotic who ventures to say a word that is good of the man England is determined to crush.” Her description filtered into the colonies; for example, *The Argus* in Melbourne on January 6, 1883 and the *Southland Times* in Southern New Zealand on January 16, 1883.

¹³² Chaillé-Long capitalized on these events in the Sudan by publishing his second book, a highly critical analysis of Gordon. Chaillé-Long, *The Three Prophets: Chinese Gordon, Mohammed-Ahmed (El Maahdi), Arabi Pasha. Events before and after the Bombardment of Alexandria*.

embraced a vision of US-Egyptian relations that acknowledged the ongoing interests of the United States in Egypt. This particular foreign policy vision obliged the two nations to remain intimate. Arthur said, "I do not conceive it to be the wish of Congress that the United States should withdraw altogether from the honorable position they have hitherto held with respect to the Khedive, or that citizens of this Republic residing or sojourning in Egypt should hereafter be without the aid and protection of a competent representative."¹³³ It would be nearly a year before Arthur's replacement, President Grover Cleveland, appointed John Cardwell US Consul-General to Egypt during a recess of the Senate.

After his endorsement of diplomatic relations with Egypt, Arthur turned to France: "the colossal statue of Liberty Enlightening the World, the generous gift of the people of France, is expected to reach New York in May next. I suggest that Congressional action be taken in recognition of the spirit which has prompted this gift and in aid of the timely completion of the pedestal upon which it is to be placed."¹³⁴ The construction of the pedestal, which Arthur asked Congress to fund, was being led by the former Chief of Mercenaries, Charles Stone. Back from Egypt, Stone's engineering and management experience was being put to a familiar use in helping to assemble the monumental architecture of empire as Chief Engineer of the Statue of Liberty from 1883

¹³³ Gerhard Peters, "Chester A. Arthur, State of the Union Addresses and Messages, 1884," <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/sou.php>. Just a few months earlier, Arthur had recognized Leopold's claim to the Congo that set the stage for the Berlin Conference.

¹³⁴ Ibid. Arthur also noted that "Certain questions between the United States and the Ottoman Empire still remain unsolved. Complaints on behalf of our citizens are not satisfactorily adjusted. The Porte has sought to withhold from our commerce the right of favored treatment to which we are entitled by existing conventional stipulations, and the revision of the tariffs is unaccomplished."

to 1885.¹³⁵ Assisted by William Loring and others, he helped to design and construct the pedestal and subsequently served as master of ceremonies when the statue was dedicated. He became ill shortly after the inauguration of Liberty Enlightening the World.

Loring and Chaillé-Long were both by Stone's bed when he died in New York in 1887. In spite of having redeemed himself in Egypt, Stone's obituarist Fitz-John Porter, the former Civil War General, regretted that Stone left his family in poverty.¹³⁶ A year after he died, the *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* published Stone's final account of his role as Chief of Mercenaries for the American mission to Egypt. Stone reminisced about the US Civil War, and included several items from his time in Egypt that he hoped the Institution might wish to archive. Stone, then, in the end connected his experience in Egypt to his work as a soldier in the United States. The items he offered the Institution were proof of the intimate relationship between the United States and Egypt, a relationship whose memory lives on in military and other archives.¹³⁷

Conclusion: The Obelisk and the Betrayal

The burst of mercenary narratives that the British occupation helped to produce and authorize was not the last that people in the United States and elsewhere would hear

¹³⁵ "General Charles Pomeroy Stone - Statue of Liberty National Monument," National Park Service, <http://www.nps.gov/stli/historyculture/general-charles-pomeroy-stone.htm>. On its website, the National Park Service does not mention Stone's mercenary service in Egypt.

¹³⁶ Fitz John Porter, *In Memory of Gen. Chas. P. Stone* (Harvard College Library, 1887). Porter was Stone's classmate at West Point, and a fellow member of the Aztec Club in Mexico and USMSI. Porter was a fine choice for the obituary. He had spent almost twenty years clearing his own name after a Civil War court martial, and he had once turned down a position on the Egyptian General Staff. Whatever the Stone family's economic condition after Charles Stone's death, it was not permanent. Stone's John became a famous (and wealthy) scientist. George H. Clark, *The Life of John Stone: Mathematician, Physicist, Electrical Engineer, and Great Inventor* (San Diego: Frye & Smith Ltd., 1946).

¹³⁷ Charles P. Stone, "Stone-Pacha and the Secret Despatch," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 8 (1888).

about the American mission. Following the British invasion and Stone's departure from Egypt, there was a significant and, perhaps, inevitable, disinvestment in Egypt as anything but an object of ancient wonder and modern curiosity; no longer did the country appear as a possible ally and foil against both the Ottoman Empire and the European powers. Yet the significance of the British occupation of Egypt and the ongoing intimacy of Egypt and the United States was not forgotten by Elbert Farman, who as Consul-General and a judge on the Mixed Courts had been closely associated with the nearly fifty US mercenaries who worked in Egypt. Farman was active not only in the political arm of US diplomacy, but also in its cultural arm. In 1879, he played an important role in securing an Egyptian Obelisk—dubbed Cleopatra's Needle—for the city of New York. Farman returned to the United States after his stint in the courts and remained active in domestic politics.

In 1904, Farman wrote *Along the Nile with General Grant*, an account of Grant's 1878 visit to Egypt. Relating Grant's visit gave Farman the opportunity to talk extensively about ancient Egypt and the current state of Egyptology—a description he hoped might interest laymen.¹³⁸ It also gave Farman an opportunity to eulogize Charles Stone more than fifteen years after his death. Farman recalls that Grant told him that along with General McClellan, Stone was one of “the two persons that were looked up to by the whole army.” The two generals, Grant told Farman, “undoubtedly had the best military education, and were the two most informed men” in the army. At Ball's Bluff, Stone was too loyal to McClellan to blame him for the disaster. Grant confided to

¹³⁸ Farman, *Along the Nile with General Grant*.

Farman, “in the Civil War, Stone was the “most unfortunate man he [Grant] had ever known, but that his misfortunes were no fault of his own”¹³⁹ Farman’s report of Grant’s praise was the best eulogy Stone could ever have received. But Farman was not done writing about the history of the American mission.

In 1908, more than a quarter of a century after the British invasion, the former Consul General published a corrective to what he described as an “extravagantly laudatory” account of Lord Cromer’s administration of Egypt.¹⁴⁰ *Egypt and its betrayal; an account of the country during the periods of Ismaïl and Tewfik pashas, and of how England acquired a new empire*, positioned Egypt as a once-potential partner in the modern world who had been taken advantage of by European powers. Perhaps because it constituted a significant part of his own legacy, Farman devoted four chapters of his book to a discussion of the origins, presentation, and transport of Cleopatra’s Needle from Egypt to the United States.¹⁴¹ For Farman, the gift of the obelisk was evidence of the strong bond that had been forged between modern Egypt, no longer in need of such reminders of the past, and the United States. “Considering all of the circumstances, the

¹³⁹ Ibid., 32.

¹⁴⁰ ———, *Egypt and Its Betrayal; an Account of the Country During the Periods of Ismaïl and Tewfik Pashas, and of How England Acquired a New Empire*, vi.

¹⁴¹ Efforts to secure the obelisk had their origins in an erroneous report in a New York newspaper in late 1877 that the Khedive had informed John Dixon, a contractor transporting a similar obelisk from Egypt to London, that the government would also like to present an obelisk to the United States. When Dixon immediately disavowed any such conversation with the khedive, the matter dropped out of the public eye. Grant visited shortly after and Farman broached the matter. Grant, no longer President, agreed that if an obelisk could be secured then one should be. The Khedive was surprised when Farman brought up the subject, but agreed to consider it. At a party, M. de Lesseps, an intimate of the government, also agreed that that the presentation of an obelisk was a good idea. The Khedive presented the obelisk to New York only a month before his abdication. Farman says that after the abdication certain Europeans attempted to prevent the removal of the obelisk, but the Council of Ministers considered it a done deal and by October the removal commenced.

Khedive could not have furnished a stronger proof of his respect for the Government and people of the United States than his gift of Cleopatra's Needle." While the British and the French had taken their obelisks as "return for favors and presents" and payment for "services rendered," the presentation of an obelisk to the United States demonstrated "the respect and kindly feelings of a sovereign towards a government and a people who had always been his friends, and who had no selfish designs to further against him, his subjects, or his country."¹⁴² The constant repetition of the United States' exceptional lack of interest in empire was a common theme among the members of the American mission. And perhaps, in many ways, Cleopatra's Needle illustrates many of the most problematic and enduring aspects of the US-Egyptian encounter. While Farman secured the obelisk thanks to the modern relationship between the two countries, the obelisk serves mostly as a reminder of the ancient Egyptian past, as well as the power of colonialism to extract cultural artifacts from distant lands for the enjoyment of Western audiences. The object—deeply phallic—is also named for a woman. Cleopatra's obelisk was a piece of old Egypt, given to the United States by a new Egypt. In spite of the intimate relationship between modern Egypt and the United States, however, the nation's cultural producers remained more committed than ever to the old Egypt as well as to a penetrable, feminized Orient. Perhaps this retrograde Egyptomania is why Farman felt the need to set the record straight.

¹⁴² Farman, *Egypt and Its Betrayal; an Account of the Country During the Periods of Ismail and Tewfik Pashas, and of How England Acquired a New Empire*, 165-166.

By 1908, the legacy of the American mission was fading. Farman reflected, “the leading Americans who were in the service of the Khedive (Generals Stone and Loring, Colonels Colston, Field and many others) have also disappeared. The same may be said of the prominent Americans who visited the land of the Nile in that period, and who were kindly received by Ismaïl: Grant, Sherman, Washburn, Maynard, and Noyes.”¹⁴³ Nowhere did Farman mention Chaillé-Long, whom he had battled in the Mixed Courts and who had opposed the acquisition of the obelisk in 1876. But Long was still alive and lived ten more years, compiling and revising the materials I describe in this and the preceding chapter. That encounters of all types are about memory and recognition is perhaps no better illustrated than by Long, who, in the aftermath of US imperial growth at the turn of the twentieth century, concluded that:

Such in parvo is the story of the Forgotten American Military Mission to Egypt—forgotten alike by Government and people. There is no record of its services either in the state, war, or navy departments in Washington. The records in the departments in Cairo were once replete with the achievements of our American Mission but recent books and publications on Modern Egypt and Africa are as bare of mention of Americans as the monuments of Ramses II had erased the (cartouches) of his predecessors. History repeats itself in Egypt.¹⁴⁴

Indeed, history does repeat itself. And true to mercenary form—like Eaton one hundred years earlier—Long desired, above all, recognition.

Surely our Government would defend the work of its citizens who have aided to its good name even its glory. Americans have the unfortunate disposition to fly kites for others and we are too often content, even proud, to be the tail of other kites. This disposition should be repressed. The day has come when we should fly kites of our own and fly them beyond the clouds, if in so doing, it exalt our national pride.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Ibid., 273.

¹⁴⁴ Chaillé-Long, "The Forgotten American Mission to Egypt," 16-17.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 17.

What, though, did Long want credit for? The Bugandan Princess—M'tse—whom Kabaka Muteesa I sent back with him to be educated in Cairo became sick and died. And ultimately, Long's old boss Gordon was killed in Khartoum during the Mahdist uprising. The Somalian expedition, which Long had promised to write about at the end of *Central Africa: Naked Truths of Naked People*, was uneventful, and after realizing the distance between the Equatorial provinces and the Indian Ocean was much larger than originally thought, the Egyptians heeded British advice at Zanzibar to return to Egypt. The Abyssinian War that followed left a very bitter taste in the mouths of native officers and European creditors. The British occupation that followed the debt crisis—or the betrayal as Farman later called it—marked the end a particularly American version of modernity in the Middle East and Africa, one that centered on an ever-expanding military that could serve hard frontier duty accompanied by all the feminine charms of the domestic. Still, in spite of the failure of the American mission, Egypt continues to occupy an important role in the United States' image of the Middle East.

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